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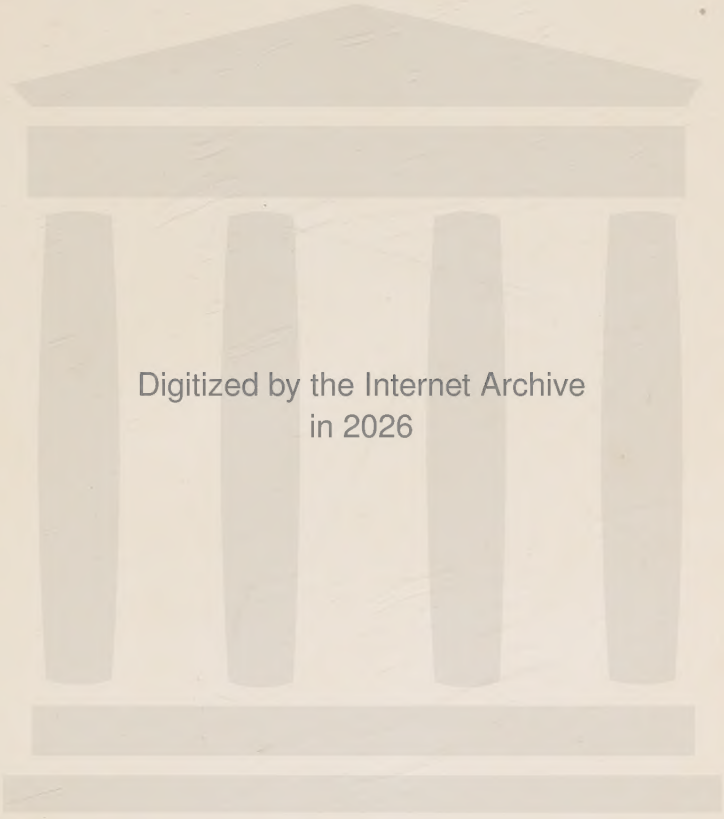
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A HISTORY OF TRAVEL IN AMERICA

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A History of Travel in America

Showing the Development of Travel and Transportation from the Crude Methods of the Canoe and the Dog-Sled to the Highly Organized Railway Systems of the Present, Together with a Narrative of the Human Experiences and Changing Social Conditions that Accompanied this Economic Conquest of the Continent

BY

SEYMOUR DUNBAR

With maps, colored plates and other illustrations reproduced from early engravings, original contemporaneous drawings and broadsides

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To L. D.

PREFACE

A story of national growth does not simply recite the results of human endeavor: it is more deeply concerned with the character of the people discussed, and with the ideals, motives and methods underlying their acts.

Understanding of history is not gained through mere acquaintance with what was done. It is obtained by comprehension of the purpose and manner of the doing. Those individual figures and throngs of mankind who inhabit the pages of written history should not be manikins or mummies, but living men enacting their daily deeds, vitalized with the spirit that moved them while they were indeed here. We should be able to see them; to hear their cries of fear or delight; to smile at their revelry; feel anger at their evil and deceit, regret at their blunders, pride in their worthy accomplishments. Only by coming thus close to the past—by knowing it to be part of our own lives instead of looking upon it as a museum of curiosities—can we apply its value as a guide to ourselves.

Doubtless it is no longer possible to tell in words and pictorially portray, with reasonable completeness, the historical conditions considered in these volumes. That this should be so is cause for regret, since the story of those pioneer ideas, struggles and devices out of which grew a nation in the social and economic sense—rather than in a political sense—is the foundation history of the country.

We have now reached a period sufficiently removed

from the pioneer constructive era to see it in its entirety, and, through our ability in that regard, to profit somewhat by the experiences of those earlier generations. They—just as we of to-day—displayed occasional wisdom in their joint undertakings; were often careless; sometimes quite blind; and at times permitted themselves to be swayed by desires whose indulgence wrought harm to them. But in one particular—during their upbuilding of a transportation system—they differed widely from present-day Americans. They sought to create facilities for movement and communication which should meet previous and desperate needs; they built for themselves and their own short day. We are beginning to do much more than that. We are looking ahead, both for the sake of ourselves and for those who are to come after us.

It therefore appears that the underlying thought and basic plan of the inexperienced pioneers, out of which grew the system they made and bequeathed to us—and which we are still using—is not altogether such a thought and economic plan as fits our later desire and determination. A conflict between old conditions and new ideas has resulted. Various methods and practises which developed out of the pioneer procedure have been outgrown, and no longer fit the age into which they have survived. We are now seeking to rid ourselves of the undesirable parts of our inheritance, with resolution so to do, and are likewise trying to avoid the making of similar mistakes while dealing with the same large subject.

It follows that a study of the pioneers, and of that work of theirs which has come to be of such importance to ourselves, may be of aid to us amid our present problems. If the following pages present some past conditions whose intimate relationship to the world of to-day could other-

wise have been forgotten, and if they suggest the application of certain principles to our present and future affairs, then the work of preparing them will have been repaid. Nations—like individual men—must struggle over the road of the pilgrim's progress.

In preparing the accompanying volumes reliance has been placed, wherever possible, on original and contemporaneous material for text and illustration. Sources for the text have been files of early newspapers; various collections of manuscripts and documents in libraries, historical societies and elsewhere; diaries, letters and printed chronicles of pioneers; narratives in state and local histories; maps; state and governmental records; and information contained in earlier publications of a particular sort, the titles to some of which are given in an appended bibliography.

The illustrative material, with its attendant notes, is selected and arranged to form a flowing and connected story of its own, independent of the text. Yet at the same time the pictorial narrative is designed as a commentary on and explanation of the text. Technical description of the original prints and other material will be found in a proper place.

I wish to acknowledge my obligation to my friends Carl Burger, George Marriott, John Price Jones, Charles Fuess, Griffis Rhys Jenkyn, Franklin Harris, George Mather Richards, Frank P. O'Brien, Dexter Cook, Hillard H. Weer, Thomas Embly, Phanor Eder, Edward Broderick and Leslie Quirk for aid in connection with the preparation of this work.

My thanks are due to the American Antiquarian Society; to the British Museum; the Congressional Library; the State Libraries of Indiana, New Jersey, New

York and Ohio; the libraries of Boston, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Newark, New York City and Providence; the Society Library of New York City; the University Libraries of Columbia, Harvard, Princeton, Wyoming and Yale; and the Historical Societies of Connecticut, Indiana, Long Island, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Wyoming, for information obtained from those institutions or the use of books and documents contained in their collections.

I wish also to acknowledge my obligation to the antiquarians Messrs. Robert Fridenberg, Emil Sauer, Charles Everitt, Edward Eberstadt, Edward Gottschalk, Joseph Sabin, P. Stammer, Oscar Wegelin and Henry O'Leary of New York City, Messrs. Rosenbach of Philadelphia and Messrs. Goodspeed of Boston, for their professional aid over an interval of years, in searching out and securing for me, in America and Europe, the historical illustrative material herein reproduced.

S. D.

New York City,
October, 1914.

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Sm. .....Small.
L. .....Large.
12mo.....Duodecimo.
8vo.....Octavo.
4to.....Quarto.
F. .....Folio.
W. .....Engraved on wood.
S. .....Engraved on steel.
C. .....Engraved on copper.
A. .....Aquatint.
M. .....Mezzotint.
Lith. .....Lithograph.
Col. Lith...Lithograph printed in colors.
Lith. Col...Lithograph colored after printing.
C. Col.....Copper-plate colored after printing.
O. .....Original.
Dr. .....Drawing.
D. .....Document.
Ms. .....Manuscript.
B. .....Broadside.
Adv. .....Advertisement.
T. .....Type.
c. .....About.
Proof .....Unpublished.
Amer. .....American.

Names of countries other than America are not abbreviated. If the engraving was originally published in Germany, France, England, Scotland, Holland, Sweden, or elsewhere, it is so stated.

In any case wherein the original engraving or drawing had a blank margin of considerable or unnecessary width, a part of the blank paper surrounding the drawing or engraved surface has been omitted in the photographic reproduction, as an economy of space.

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A HISTORY OF TRAVEL IN AMERICA

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A HISTORY OF TRAVEL IN AMERICA

CHAPTER I

A SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL FEATURES OF THE SUBJECT AND AN INDICATION OF THE METHODS AND PURPOSES HEREAFTER FOLLOWED IN ITS DISCUSSION

THE story of the upbuilding of our present methods of travel and transportation is not a record of the development of a system for the carrying of commodities. It is a history of the devices originated by the people primarily for their personal use and comfort in moving from place to place. Only after the early population had occupied some new region by means of the crude and primitive travel methods then in use were there any commodities to move or men to move them, and not until then, after each successive surge of population into fresh territory, were existing methods of human travel expanded, or new ones brought into being, for the purpose of also transporting the material wealth those pioneers had created.

The pioneer, no matter of what date or locality, was always a traveller before he was a producer or shipper of goods, and the common experience of the people, gained on their journeys, was — save in one instance — the basis on which future permanent routes and methods of travel

were planned and created. The one exception to this manner of evolution lay in the memorable demonstration that steam could be successfully used for the propulsion of travel vehicles. It was an instance wherein genius and reason overshadowed experience and precedent.

America has witnessed the introduction and development of much that has been permanently adopted into the travel methods of the world. That this is so is not, in all probability, due chiefly to the genius or inventive ability of the nation as a first cause. Its underlying reason, rather, can be traced to the extent and configuration of the country, to the period during which its population assumed goodly size, to certain political events of its history, and to a universal restlessness and desire for haste which for a long time has been so characteristic of its people.

For nearly a hundred and fifty years from the establishment of the first permanent settlements along the Atlantic coast there were practically no improvements made in the manner of moving over the face of the land. Almost all progress, in that respect, was confined to improving Indian trails which led into the wilderness, joining a newly-established farm or settlement to its neighbors, or turning old pack-horse paths into crude wagon roads as the settlements gradually grew into towns. During all that time the trend of travel, generally speaking, was north and south. True, there were a few adventurous spirits who plunged into the unknown and sometimes came back, bringing tales of distances beyond comprehension, of never-ending woods, of unknown mountains, rivers or lakes. But that was not travel. That was adventure, hunting or sheer folly, and the population, clinging to its little strip of a hundred and fifty miles in width

along the coast, never seriously considered giving battle to the vastness which brooded beside them.

Yet those early Americans were commencing the conquest, though they did not know it. Each new farm established a little farther on, each new child born, helped toward the far-distant victory; but their chief contribution to the contest in which nature was at last to be defeated by man's demand for movement in speed and comfort lay in a gradual change in the character of the people themselves. As generation after generation slipped by, the separation of related families and an increase in the petty business affairs of the population multiplied the small journeys between different settlements and colonies. The time of the individual man became more valuable. The restlessness and hurry of the modern American, his desire for speed and a short-cut to his destination, found its small beginning. Gradually, also, the attitude of the people toward the wilderness changed. It still remained—as do its present fragments—a thing of awe, but it was better comprehended and less feared.

Then was introduced into the problem a political element which had no visible relevancy at the time, but whose relationship to the subject, from this latter-day standpoint, is apparent. The revolution against England, the confederation of the colonies that followed its success, and the acquirement of the immense region known as the Louisiana Purchase gave to the people a lesson in the necessity of united action, a better understanding of the common welfare, and a gradual realization that they had, for a task, the subjugation of a continent.

The period during and immediately following these political incidents in America marked the beginning of a new social, intellectual and industrial era throughout the

civilized world. All that had happened theretofore, for a long time, was practically the last chapter of the Middle Ages. Modern life as we know it, and the use of human creative energy in a way designed to transform

1.—Indians fashioning log canoes by means of fire and tools. Craft of this sort were the first vehicles used by English-speaking white colonists in America.

the circumstances of mankind, began then. It was the time of the great awakening; the birth of mechanical power; the beginning of an epoch whose unbelievable achievements would drive the mind to madness were they not, happily, so commonplace. We are scarcely human beings any more — merely spectators of a drama of development which has no visible end, and whose actors make up the plot as they go along.

From about 1785 until 1870 old methods and conditions went to the scrap heap, and the world, as we bump

against it, was built all over again. And in no other one feature of man's affairs, perhaps, were greater or more extraordinary changes made than in his manner of travelling. In the revolution thus accomplished America, for obvious reasons, took a part that was very prominent. There were then but two continents — Europe and America — whose peoples found within themselves the necessity of change. Africa, Australia, South America and Asia were not ready. They were to escape the period of experiment and to install, at a later day, the tested and perfected systems brought to completion elsewhere. America had an advantage over Europe in that her problem was a larger one, and presented conditions more primitive and complex. Greater necessities resulted in bigger performances. To this may also be added the fact that Europe presented, to the impending evolution in travel, a multitude of comparatively small states whose size, peculiar geographical relationships and political quarrels definitely prevented the adoption of a uniform, continental system of communication development. America, on the contrary, offered in her compact mass and shape an ideal opportunity for the planning and methodical creation of such a system. But she did not see the chance, and threw it away. Twice — first when steamboats came into general use, and again in the early years of railroad building — those who had the shaping of public affairs failed to see the portent of what was taking place, and the petty jealousies of individual states were permitted to warp and disfigure the results of those vital years. Viewing the history of the whole American period under discussion — from about 1630 until 1870—it seems as though the clearest perception of the significance of events and of public necessity and intent was to be found most quickly,

not in the minds of those whom history names as leaders of men, but in the collective understanding of the multitude. In their attitude toward the national need for travel facilities, during nearly all the big and important periods of the story, those famous ones have held aloof, remaining dull to opportunity and laggard in performance until the onrush of the nameless thousands swept them, like a torrent, into tardy action. Yet there were times when the multitude, as well as the head men of the country, could not understand its opportunities.

A somewhat comprehensive review is necessary—as far as the text of the record is concerned — to indicate the travel conditions existing during the first hundred and sixty years of the national history, together with the human experiences and social life which accompanied them. After those things have been considered the narrative need concern itself only with the comparatively short but important epoch between 1788-9 and 1868-9. During that interval of eighty years the transformation from archaic conditions to the vehicles we use to-day was brought about. Its chief features are better known than are those of the former era. The changes made within the last forty years have been, with few exceptions, refinements or better forms of what already existed; inevitable outgrowths of methods that preceded them. They do not call for extended comment. The pictorial part of the review must necessarily be devoted principally to the eighty years during which the revolution in methods of transportation occurred.

It is but reasonable to expect, in studying any epoch of human advancement, that certain things which took place during its continuance will stand out with prominence. That is true in this case, and we find in considering the

development of travel in America and the relation of such development to the national progress that there were five events, or movements, within the years discussed, which occupy in its history positions very similar to those held by decisive battles in the story of a nation's political life. The five events were:

The governmental organization of the Ohio country and the Northwest Territory, and the beginning of a general migration to those regions, in 1787-1789;

A general public recognition of the value of steam as a means of propulsion, in 1807-1809;

The beginning of the railway building period, in 1828-1829;

Discovery of gold in the West and the general rush across the plains, in 1848-1849;

Completion of the first transcontinental railway, in 1869.

It is an interesting circumstance that these movements, each of which was largely due to the attitude and active participation of the whole population, followed one another at intervals of almost exactly twenty years. Whether or not they were merely a series of coincidences, or whether they had their source in some deeper condition that resulted in successive periodic eruptions of mental and physical energy affecting a whole people, may be left to experts in the psychology of a growing nation. However ably the phenomenon may be explained on the basis of chance, there will, perhaps, remain a lingering notion that it was not wholly due to accident.

The years that witnessed the slow transformation from primitive to modern conditions contained, of course, much more than is indicated by these five events. They are but later landmarks from which we may most easily take our

bearings from time to time. Nor should we fail to remember that progress, in the upbuilding of our present system, did not take place with uniformity based on the lapse of years. It often happened — almost always happened, in fact — that some one section of the country was far ahead of the others in its travel facilities. This was due either to earlier settlement, disparity of population, inherited customs of the people or to the physical condition of the contrasted localities. The days of the stage-coach, for instance, persisted in the West in full vigor

2.—A white traveller in a log canoe. Such a boat was propelled by the use of a rude paddle or a pole.

for a generation after that vehicle had disappeared from the eastern states. Only within the last few years have conditions become substantially the same throughout the whole three million square miles of continental area.

The story of our upward growth from the dugout canoe to the floating hotel of to-day, from the dog-sled and Conestoga wagon to the thunderbolts that we call express trains, wonderful as the progress has been, is not one which inspires us with pride alone. There are tragedies in it, blunders and blindness and mistakes innumerable. With few precedents to serve as guides, and sometimes with no precedents at all, the problem was not like the task of an architect who draws a plan and then builds his house accordingly. In this case there was no plan, for never at any stage of the task did there appear a man who was big enough both to picture the needs of the future and to compel the attention of the public mind to them. A few men, from time to time, had visions of those things that now exist in concrete form, and many others commanded the confidence of the people in matters of different nature, but it did not happen that those two qualities were ever combined in one early personality interested in the travel and transportation facilities of the nation.

The development of the system from its primitive conditions, as a consequence, was in large degree a history of feverish energy based upon incomplete experiment; the discarding of mistakes; shortsightedness; jealousy; and a lack of unity and coherence among the various parts of the system as they were at first created. When railroads came into use, for instance, the distance between New York and Washington was at first spanned by several companies, each of which adopted a track-width different from that of the others in order that the cars of one road could not run on the rails of its rivals. Some states would not permit railroads incorporated by them to cross their boundary lines into adjoining states.

Since this preliminary chapter is, in a sense, a series of suggestions designed as a glue to hold together all that comes after, it is desirable to refer to one other general aspect of the subject. Several times within the last hundred and twenty-five years the development of our travel system has been affected — usually to its serious disadvantage — by the operation of certain well recognized phases of American character. The traits that have had such an influence are the tendency of the public mind to concentrate all its attention on some one subject of spectacular or popular interest at the moment, to the exclusion of other matters often more deserving of thought; an intensity of public feeling which, when once aroused, fosters either a general optimism or corresponding pessimism; and the restlessness and desire for hurry at any cost that has been so prominent and so steadily increasing for about a century.

The exhibition of these traits has varied, and still does, in different periods, regions and cities. More than once it has happened that some circumstance or experience of easily recognized importance to the whole people has had a powerful effect, for a considerable time, in exciting one or more of those qualities. And whenever such an occurrence or condition of public affairs has coincided with a critical period in the history of our travel system the effect has always been noticeable, and often strange — from our present viewpoint. Sometimes the public mind has been made incapable of seeing an opportunity which, if realized and grasped, would have saved many years.

Again, when under the sway of an era of happy-go-lucky optimism, the people have tolerated or accepted much discomfort and danger in going from place to place, only to alter their attitude, suddenly manifest their dis-

3.—Large bark canoes were sometimes employed in bays and along the coast. Also showing a sailing vessel made by laying a deck on the transverse timbers which united two canoes. This principle was afterward used in small craft on interior rivers. See illustration No. 89.

pleasure at such undesirable conditions, and suggest the ending of them forthwith. That particular series of events is constantly recurring even until to-day. But the imposition, public awakening and compelling of drastic though necessary reform which is now occasionally apparent is attended with less of popular outcry than formerly accompanied such situations. We have become more self-contained, and, in addition, the transportation system in all its ramifications has learned that the comfort and safety of the traveller must be considered before all else.

The subject to which these pages are devoted is the foundation whereon the country, considered as a social and industrial organization, has been built. A few years ago — until as late a date as 1806 — the six or seven million people of America were contentedly visiting their friends, or moving about on business, in flatboats, dog-sleds, stage-coaches, strange wagons or canoes. Those were the only vehicles of travel and when they were not available, as was very often the case, the traveller walked or else rode upon a horse. To go from the Atlantic seacoast to such remote regions as Cincinnati or St. Louis or Fort Dearborn — now Chicago — in those days meant a journey of many weary weeks, with possibly the loss of a scalp. Such a thing as a trip across the continent and back was not within the range of thought of the ordinary man. A vast undertaking like that, requiring years for its accomplishment, demanded the resources of the national government and an elaborate exploring expedition. When at last it was performed, the successful making of a transcontinental journey became the subject of a universal interest and acclaim. Books were written about it.

To-day we are annoyed if we are late for breakfast in

Chicago or Cincinnati after having left the Atlantic coast in the middle of the previous afternoon, and the railway apologizes, and returns part of our money. Also we are ninety millions instead of seven, and by the waters of the Pacific sit great cities but five days separated from their sisters of the East.

The stage-coach, canal-boat, canoe, dog-sled and prairie schooner, and the archaic steamboat and railway train also, have become fossils in the geology of modern life. But the tale of the part they played in the growth and development of the country still remains. It is the one story written by all Americans in collaboration.

In this present realm of four-day ocean steamships, of trains that dive beneath rivers or plunge through a thousand miles in twenty hours, of subways, motor-cars, submarine boats, and with the flying machine just beginning to dot the sky, we are privileged to remember, if we choose, that once upon a time the express boats on the canals maintained a speed of three miles an hour for day after day, and that the Pioneer Fast Line advertised it would rush its passengers through from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh in four days — and often nearly kept its word.

CHAPTER II

THE CONDITION AND APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY IN EARLY DAYS — DIFFICULTY OF TRAVEL THROUGH THE VAST FOREST — INDIAN TRAILS THE FIRST MEANS AND BASIS OF LAND MOVEMENT BY THE WHITES — TRAVEL BY WATER PREFERRED WHENEVER POSSIBLE — HOW THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF CANOES WERE MADE AND USED

ONE of the best records of the difficulties and methods of American travel in the early days is contained in a few words of a lately discovered document written in 1694.[1] In that year Benjamin Fletcher, Governor of His Majesty's Province of New York, was planning an attack on the French in Canada, and he called on his subordinates for a report which should show the strength of the enemy and by what route and method of travel he could most easily reach them.

The answer to Governor Fletcher's demand, recently brought to light, was written by William Pinhorne and N. Bayard at New York, on July 25 of the year named, and in it they said:

"It is Impossible to march with any party of men to Canada by Land, either in winter or summer, but they must passe a Considerable Part of ye way over ye Lake,[2] ye Land on each side being extream steep and Rocky,

[1] Now in the New York Historical Society's collection.
[2] Lake Champlain.

mountains or els a meer morasse cumbred with underwood, where men cannot goe upright, but must creep throu Bushes for whole days' marches, and impossible for horses to goe at any time of ye year."

And in a letter written by Deputy Governor Hinckley of Plymouth Colony, about 1680, in which he appeals to the English officials in London for certain favors, he argues that the colony is entitled to what he asks because it was "the first that broke the ice, and underwent ye brunt, at our own charge, for the enlargement of his Majesties' dominions in this heretofore most howling wilderness, amidst wild men and wild beasts."

In these two quotations may be found the essential outlines of the conditions under which the people of America in those days, and for long afterward, lived and moved about the country. It was, indeed, a "most howling wilderness," so immense in its extent and unconquerable in its aspect that for more than a century and a half the white population sat, helpless and afraid, along a little strip of seacoast but a hundred and fifty miles in width. Yet the interior of North America is more easily accessible for travel, when approached and entered from the Atlantic seaboard, than is the corresponding region of any other continent.

There are few descriptions that were written in those very early days expressly to show the methods and hardships of travel. No doubt the lack of such narratives is due to the state of mind revealed by every people, in every period, toward those things that, to them, are commonplace and familiar. The Americans of two hundred and fifty years ago prepared many long and careful accounts of such things as they saw but once in a lifetime, but of records far more interesting to us, records illumi-

nating the every-day conditions by which they were surrounded, they left but little that was set down with historical purpose. Most of our knowledge of the sort has been pieced together from fragments such as diaries and personal letters that have survived by accident.

The report to Governor Fletcher condenses into a few words certain conditions which dominated all travel in America from the time of its first permanent English oc-

4.—Indians building bark canoes in the forest. They were made from the bark of the birch, spruce or elm. The first white settlers at once adopted this conveyance, and used it in their westward advance for more than two centuries.

cupation until shortly before the Revolution. Those conditions were the use of water routes wherever possible; the uselessness of horses except near settlements or on beaten paths; the necessity of performing extended journeys on foot; and the extreme difficulty of progress

through the woods. From the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River — excepting some open country in the region now in part occupied by Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois — the land was covered by a continuous and almost unbroken forest. This wilderness was a thousand miles in extent from east to west, and about as long from north to south. Through it, in every direction, ran countless rivers and their tributaries.

Now this genuine primeval forest of America was very different in its character and appearance from any of the so-called primeval American woods of to-day. Centuries of alien human companionship affect the nature of forests in a marked degree. Those that still remain, even though covering areas never swept bare by the hand of man, have become, in a sense, civilized. The bulk of the wilderness, as it was until about 1790, was composed of trees that were from two to five feet in diameter. In those regions where the trees grew close together the girth gave way to height, and many reached a hundred and fifty feet into the air. Not until a tree was some six or eight feet in diameter was it considered a large one and those that attracted the attention of travellers, and were measured, were ten, twelve and sometimes even fifteen feet in thickness. There are numerous records of such monsters in the region east of the Mississippi now occupied by the Middle States.[1]

The earth beneath these huge growths was cumbered with fallen trees of all sizes and in all stages of decay. The hurricanes that now do occasional damage to towns and farms regularly wrought their havoc in the wilderness, and the confusion and tangle of the forest after the

[1] On Manhattan Island, New York City, there still survives one of those ancient monarchs. It is a tulip tree about ten feet in diameter at the ground, and six feet thick at the height of a man.

visit of such a storm can easily be pictured. Up from the earth made rich by ages of decayed vegetation sprang all manner of thickets and similar small growths that sometimes choked the lower spaces and were frequently bound together by a snarl of vines tough as wires or as big as a man's wrist. The rains or melting snows left such soil very slowly, and that is why there are frequent references, in olden records, to swamps or morasses which then occupied sections that have long since become dry and solid ground.

Such was the wilderness. It climbed the hills and mountains with its three hundred species of trees, and, stopping only for the passage of a river, resumed its sway upon the farther bank and still marched on. The little streams, completely covered, flowed under archways amid somber shadows.

The human habitants of this vast and gloomy region, in which the sun's rays in places never reached the ground, were two or three hundred thousand copper-colored natives,[1] whose numbers were too small to have made any impression on it, even had they been so inclined. But they were not so purposed. Instead, they were peculiarly in harmony and sympathy with their home, and desired that it should remain always as they knew it. The few agricultural clearings made by some of the Indians who lived north of the Ohio River, by the Iroquois in what is now central New York state, and elsewhere, were trivial gashes amid the universal woods. When the Indians travelled they moved by water if their purpose made it possible. For their land travel they created paths leading from one stream to another. In going across country they had a wonderful faculty for establishing routes that were,

[1] Early estimates of the number of the Indian population were much exaggerated.

in an economic sense, the best that could be chosen. An Indian overland trail always led the traveller to his destination in less time, or with fewer physical obstacles to overcome, than any other course that could be selected

5.—White men travelling through the wilderness by bark canoe. The craft is about to be unloaded and carried overland around the rapids.

between the two points which it connected. Practically the whole present-day system of travel and transportation in America east of the Mississippi River, including many turnpikes, is based upon, or follows, the system of forest paths established by the Indians hundreds of years ago.

These Indian trails — the corner-stone of land travel in America — were from twelve to eighteen inches in width, and sometimes, when they led through regions where the native travel was particularly heavy and long continued, were worn a foot deep by generations of soft

moccasins. Along such native highways the trained runners of the Indians are believed to have covered, on some few occasions, almost a hundred miles between sunrise and sunset.

Centuries after their paths were laid out a white man named Nathaniel Hawthorne spoke of the use of them made by his fellow white men of Massachusetts, and he said: "The forest track trodden by the hob-nailed shoes of these sturdy Englishmen has now a distinctness which it never could have acquired from the light tread of a hundred times as many moccasins. It goes onward from one clearing to another, here plunging into a shadowy strip of woods, there open to the sunshine, but everywhere showing a decided line along which human interests[1] have begun to hold their career . . . And the Indians coming from their distant wigwams to view the white man's settlement marvel at the deep track which he makes, and perhaps are saddened by a flitting presentiment that this heavy tread will find its way over all the land."

Hawthorne, had he not the mind of a poet, would have put the idea more bluntly than he did, for it was no mere flitting presentiment that the Indian of his day held. It was a realization of the inevitable, acknowledged with a despair that was felt, though unspoken. When Peter Wilson, a Cayuga chief and very able Indian, visited New York City in 1847 he delivered an address before the New York Historical Society in which he referred to this same subject. "The Empire State, as you love to call it," were the words of the red chief, "was once laced by our trails from Albany to Buffalo; trails that we have trod for centuries; trails worn so deep by the feet of the Iroquois that they became your roads of travel, as your possessions grad-

[1] White men's interests is what he meant.

ually ate into those of my people. Your roads still traverse those same lines of communication which bound one part of the Long House[1] to the other."

The forest roads of the natives — first aids to such land travel as was attempted in early days by the white population of America — were not the only contribution made by the red men to the methods of the newcomers. From them, also, was taken the earliest form of water craft. The canoe, as used by the Indians and at once adopted by the whites, was of two very different forms. One was made from a log of suitable size, and the other from the bark of trees, especially the birch, spruce, or elm. The use of these two types, both by the Indians and afterward by white invaders, depended on the nature of the waters to be navigated, the desire for speed, and the frequent necessity of making portages from one stream to another. To some extent also the type was a geographical one, since the birch tree from the bark of which the best kind of bark canoe was made was not so plentiful in the South as in the North. For a heavy wooden canoe a fallen log was selected that, while still entirely sound, had become somewhat seasoned. Sometimes a standing tree was chosen by the Indians and felled by means of hatchets or fire. A section of the trunk from fifteen to thirty feet long and about three feet in diameter was then cut out and elevated from the ground, for convenience in carrying on the work. The log was shaped and hollowed by fire and cutting implements, and a very strong and serviceable, though rough and slow moving craft was obtained.[2] Such canoes were only adapted for lakes or single rivers. They were not taken overland from one water to another.

In fashioning the much more graceful, mobile and

[1] The Iroquois name for their Confederacy.
[2] Such a canoe became known by the colonists as a "pirogue," or "perogue."

6.—Building pinnaces, schooners and similar boats for travel along the coast. A scene in New Amsterdam during the Dutch occupancy, drawn from an early description and sketch.

useful birch-bark canoe the Indian selected his tree, made a straight vertical incision in the bark from near the base of the trunk to a spot at the height of his head, and then, with utmost care, peeled the bark from the tree by the aid of his knife. The framework of the craft was made of thin strips of cedar or spruce, and the birch-bark covering was attached to it by long, tough, slender, fibrous roots of the larch or balsam, which had previously been manipulated into extreme pliability. The various strips of birch-bark were also sewed together with the same sort of roots, and, before being fastened to the framework, were cut to the necessary pattern. The boat was then completed and given its final shape by the insertion of the many narrow and elastic ribs of spruce. All seams and cracks were covered with hot pitch from the balsam or spruce, and the canoe was water-tight and ready for use. Each tribe had

its own pattern or style for its canoes, and they varied in size from ten or twelve feet to fifty or sixty feet in length.

In this wonderful and famous boat, created by the woodcraft genius of the Indian from the materials immediately about him, he could travel for thousands of miles if need be. When he came to the head waters of a stream, where the current no longer afforded the few inches of depth necessary to carry him on his way, he could pick up his canoe and carry it for miles to another lake or river. In times of storm it served him as a snug shelter, and the forest was a factory where it could be repaired, or even replaced, at any time, with prompt delivery guaranteed.

"Thus the Birch Canoe was builded
In the valley, by the river,
In the bosom of the forest;
And it floated on the river
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn,
Like a yellow water lily."[1]

[1]Longfellow's lines, from "Hiawatha."

CHAPTER III

EARLY DEVELOPMENT GOVERNED BY THE NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES RATHER THAN BY KNOWLEDGE OR EXPLORATION — THE CENTERS FROM WHICH TRAVEL MOVEMENTS RADIATED — PRIMITIVE BRIDGES — THE BUILDING OF SMALL BOATS BEGUN — A PHILANTHROPIC MISTAKE OF THE DUTCH — ORGANIZED MIGRATIONS OF LARGE COMPANIES OF PEOPLE AN IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE FIRST CENTURY

THE many years of early exploration throughout the whole extent of the continent, carried on by brave individual adventurers and trappers chiefly from Spain and France before the year 1620 had almost no effect in shaping the after-history and development of America's travel system. The significance of any discovery in its relation to the subject, whether of route or method of travel, did not lie in the earliest information respecting that route or method, but in the popular impulse which was later — sometimes much later — to recognize its value and demand its use. It was necessity or comprehension, not knowledge; the needs or desires of the people rather than the exploits and achievements of individuals that always influenced the progress of the system and led on, little by little, to what now exists.

Hence it was that definite and visible progress in creating established methods of getting about the country did not begin until several English colonies had found

firm foothold along the Atlantic coast. There were three motives that caused the first travel movements among the early population. One was the natural wish of a settlement to get into touch with its neighbors; another was need of betterment and growth; and the third was an occasional impulse, due to differences of one sort or another, which sometimes caused part of a colony to separate from the rest of it and go elsewhere to set up for itself.

The five principal localities from which radiated the first travel movements of the country were the Chesapeake Bay region; eastern Massachusetts; New York Bay and the Great River of the Mountains;[1] the Connecticut River valley and Long Island Sound; and Delaware Bay and the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers. Three of these, the Chesapeake, New York and Delaware Bays, are important among those gateways already referred to through which the interior of the country is accessible from the Atlantic seaboard. But the two biggest entrances of all—the Mississippi River with its tributaries and the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes — were destined to play a much smaller part in the story than their importance warranted. For it so happened that the course of wars and politics in Europe produced conditions in America which deprived the Mississippi, the St. Lawrence River and the lakes of much of the influence they might otherwise have had in shaping the development of travel in America.

For generations five mutually jealous and conflicting groups were quarreling and fighting in an effort to get control of the continent. Each of three nations— France, Spain and England — was scheming to extend its own possessions and oust the others; the English colonies

[1] An early name for the Hudson River.

were trying to secure the administration of their own affairs; and the Indians were doing what they could to be rid of the lot or restrict their movements. The continuous control of the St. Lawrence by the French for nearly a hundred and fifty years after the arrival of the first English colonies, and the similar uninterrupted holding of the Mississippi by France and Spain until some time after the Revolution, long prevented the use of those two gateways as factors in any progress in which the English speaking inhabitants were interested. And the impulse

7.—Vessels of considerable size were often built at a distance from the water and then drawn by oxen to the scene of their employment. While so moving they rested on trucks whose wheels were solid sections of hardwood trees. The scene here shown is in Philadelphia, where a large sailing boat is being finished at the side of a street.

which was finally to result in giving the Mississippi a place in the free and unobstructed travel system of the country came, not from its mouth, but from the upper valley of the stream, where a vigorous English speaking

population had become established and demanded the use of the river.

By about the year 1636, then, the movement of the population in and from all of the five regions named had

8.—The first sort of bridge used by white pioneers was a log thrown across a stream.

already begun and some action had been taken, both by the guiding minds of the colonies and by the people on their own impulse, to make such travel as easy and rapid as was possible under the conditions that surrounded them. On order of the authorities of Plymouth Colony all creeks and rivulets were bridged by felling trees across them, and canoe ferries were established for the passage of the larger streams. A few of the first canoes used by the people of Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colony were doubtless of the birch variety, bought from the Indians, but the prompt and unfortunate results of the unstable equilibrium of those canoes under the unpracticed guid-

ance of the white pioneers quickly decided them to shift to the less graceful, but more calm and sedate type of craft such as was made by hollowing a log. It is not difficult to picture the inward emotion of an Indian as he sold a birch-bark canoe to a high hatted Pilgrim, and then, standing on the river bank, watched his customer step into the craft, only instantly to leave it from the other side and disappear head first into the water. Having fished out the white interloper the red man would buy back his canoe, enter it, and depart. After the adoption of log canoes became general, and as population increased, trees especially suitable for canoe making were often marked by the authorities and protected by orders which forbade their use for any other purpose.

The difficulty of movement on the land, added to the location of the colonies on navigable waters and a growing desire to get into closer relationship with one another, led the colonists at an early date to the building of small sailing vessels suitable for navigating the many bays and short stretches of sea that separated them. These little boats were variously called pinks, pinnaces, ketches, schooners, lighters, shallops, sloops and periaguas, the names depending on differences in the rigging of the craft or the shape of the hull, or on local usage. The New England people were noticeably active in this boat making, and their first vessel, the *Blessing of the Bay,* was launched at Mystic in 1631. By 1635 six little ships had been built, and after the year 1640 the industry was well established at Boston, Gloucester, Plymouth, Salem, New Haven, New London, Dorchester, Scituate and Newport. During the forty-five years ending with 1676 no less than seven hundred and thirty vessels of some size had been created by Massachusetts colonists alone, and many hun-

dred others by the men of Connecticut, Rhode Island and Maine. A considerable number of the first craft were devoted chiefly to fishing or to trade with England, the West Indies and the other colonies, but boats of some sort or another were kept by families living near water just as a modern farmer or business man keeps an automobile. They were used to travel in whenever circumstances permitted, and were not infrequently hired for that purpose.

It was not unusual for early boats to be constructed at a considerable distance from the water, since it was occasionally more economical of time and labor to move the completed vessel overland than slowly to carry heavy timbers to the water's edge. When a ship so built was finished the settlement gathered on an appointed day, placed her bodily in a stout, rude, cradle-like platform with wide wheels, propped her securely, and off she went on her first and only land voyage. Many oxen did the hard work of pulling, and in that way boats were at times hauled a mile or two before they reached a more easily navigated element.

By the year 1641 New England had a population of about twenty thousand, and even before that time the governing bodies of the various colonies and towns had recognized the need of improving the land routes between such settlements as were near together. The Massachusetts General Court, in 1639, declared there should be a road between Plymouth and Boston, and work on it was soon commenced. As yet there was no travel by land vehicles, and the few horses were used almost solely for farm purposes. The Indian trails, or traces as they were also called, still remained the best and established links of land communication. All such trails, however, were gradually being widened without official action and

changed to roads by the increasing travel over them, and the governmental purpose was merely to hasten and improve a process that had already begun.

Probably the earliest important travel movement by a part of the population from one section of the country to another was that which resulted in the permanent establishment of English influence in what is now Connecticut. For this the Dutch at New Amsterdam were responsible, much to their later sorrow and regret. When the Dutch first planted themselves in the New World they chose, with canny foresight, three points of highest importance at that time, namely, Delaware Bay, the Hudson River valley and the Connecticut River valley. Having bought Manhattan Island for twenty-four dollars' worth of trifles that were sweet in the sight of the Indians, Governor Van Twiller indulged himself in a burst of generosity which was not thereafter repeated. He sent a party up to Plymouth to call on his English neighbors, and told the Pilgrims that the valley of the Connecticut, where the Dutch already had a sentiment or two, was very much nicer for farming than their bleak location, and recommended that they try it. This was in 1627. The Puritans of Massachusetts Bay Colony also heard favorable rumor about the Connecticut River region in 1631.

As a result of these reports a movement from the two Massachusetts colonies began in 1633, and by 1636 no less than a thousand men, women and children had undertaken the journey to their new homes. The *Blessing of the Bay* made a trip from Boston to the mouth of the Connecticut in the year first named, and at the same time a small party started overland to the river, penetrating as far as the present site of Springfield, in Massachusetts.

Later in the same year a company of people travelled by boat from Plymouth to the Connecticut coast, landed there, proceeded up the river, and started the settlement that became Windsor. Small parties followed at intervals, usually going in boats, but in November of 1635 a party numbering sixty persons succeeded in making the trip overland. This remarkable and hitherto unparallelled

9.—Bridges similar to this were the most elaborate that were required until wheeled vehicles came into use for journeys between separated settlements.

land journey of about one hundred miles was accomplished in two weeks. The household goods of the travellers were sent by water, but the live stock, consisting of numerous cattle and a few horses, marched through the forest with their owners. The speed of the caravan averaged a little more than a mile in an hour. All the men, women and sturdy children walked, and those who became ill or exhausted were placed on the broad backs

of the oxen, or on the horses. The men carried packs of food and small utensils on their backs, and were also armed, but suffered no molestation.

The climax of the migration came in 1636, when Pastor Thomas Hooker of the church in New Town led a memorable overland expedition from Massachusetts Bay colony into the Connecticut region. Although the number of those who made the journey was only about one hundred, yet the pilgrimage, with those that immediately followed it, seriously depleted the population of Dorchester, Watertown and New Town. Governor Winthrop refers to Hooker's famous exodus in his records by saying:

"June 30, 1636. Mr. Hooker, pastor of the church of New Town, and the most of his congregation went to Connecticut. His wife was carried in a horse-litter. And they drove an hundred and sixty cattle, and fed of their milk by the way."

This throng of early travellers, like their predecessors of the previous year, moved through the wilderness along the famous Indian trail afterward to become known as the Old Connecticut Path, and they established new homes on the present sites of Hartford, Windsor and Wethersfield. The trail after leaving New Town proceeded in a general western or southwestern direction, and, passing through the locations of the present towns of Marlborough, Grafton and Oxford, came at last to the future site of Springfield, on the river which was the travellers' goal. Hooker's expedition also spent two weeks in marching through the woods, and though its members were compelled to ford many streams and push their way through dense thickets and swamps under the burden of their packs, they experienced no extreme

suffering. The Indians were friendly. It was simply a matter of resolution, perseverance and hard work.

While these things were going on the Dutch had sincerely repented their hearty recommendation of the region to the English and did all they could, short of the use of actual force, to prevent its occupation. But it was too late. The English refused to be frightened by the pointing of blunderbusses and the tooting of admonitory trumpets. They discovered to their surprise that Van Twiller had told them the truth; kept coming; and when they got there, remained. For a time the Dutch remained also, in a state of dignified indignation, and then went away.

Such was the manner of travel at that time. As years went by the movements of the population gradually increased in number, covered wider areas and extended over greater distances, especially in the North. There was one common aspect of them, natural to such a newly and thinly settled country, that persisted for about a century. The people travelled in groups or companies, just as they were later to do in the settlement of the Northwest Territory and still later in their progress across the plains of the far West. Individual travel did not exist save for short distances until close to the year 1700.

Many definitely organized migrations similar to the one from Massachusetts to Connecticut followed it in all parts of the colonies during the next hundred years. They were in fact a feature of the period. During the same year that witnessed the Hooker pilgrimage a small company went northward from Massachusetts to what is now Exeter, in New Hampshire, and still another Bay State party moved to the vicinity of Dover, New Hampshire, to find a new home. Roger Williams also made his winter journey of fourteen weeks through the wilderness in 1636,

and in his wanderings to the spot where the city of Providence now stands he was fed, sheltered and kindly treated by the Indians. Others soon followed him to the same locality. The number, extent and importance of the early journeys made by organized bodies of the popula-

10.—Nearly all extensive travelling for a century and a half was undertaken by large parties moving together. Sometimes the women and children were carried in horse-litters. Many pedestrian caravans moved through the forest between such widely separated localities as New England and the Carolinas.

tion from one part of the country to another can best be shown, perhaps, in a chronological list, and a record of that sort, exclusive of those already mentioned and doubtless far from complete, is here given:

1638.—Several companies left Massachusetts and journeyed to Quinnipiac (now New Haven, Connecticut).

1639.—Milford and Guilford, in Connecticut, were similarly settled.

1639.—Parties of Dutch left New Amsterdam and occupied distant points along the Hudson River.

1640.—Settlers from New England proceeded to Long Island and established themselves at Southampton.

1642.—Emigrants from New Haven colony went to Delaware Bay, bought a tract of land at Burlington from the Indians and settled on the Delaware River. On their arrival they lived for a time in the cow houses of Swedes who had preceded them.

1642.—Another party from New Haven moved to the Delaware Bay region, bought lands from the natives on the Schuylkill River and began to establish themselves there.

1653.—A company went from Virginia into what is now North Carolina, stopped near the Chowan River and began the Albemarle settlement. Some Quakers were in this body of emigrants.

1655.—Jamaica, on Long Island, was established by people who travelled down from New England.

1656.—Many Dutch removed from New Amsterdam to the settlements on Delaware Bay.

1660.—A number of New England people went to North Carolina, bought lands of Indians on Cape Fear River and settled there. They did not like the location, however, and left.

1665.—A body of emigrants from New Hampshire journeyed to the Raritan River, in New Jersey.

1665.—From Milford, Guilford and Bramford, in New Haven colony, a considerable party set out and went to the present neighborhood of Newark, New Jersey.

1665.—A company of settlers from Newbury, in Massachusetts, established themselves on the Raritan River, in New Jersey. These three last named migrations were the result of a systematic campaign made by agents of New Jersey in New England, where they were sent to praise the country and get immigrants.

1671.—A group of Dutch from New York settled along the Ashley River, in the Carolinas.

1682 to 1690.—Large parties from Virginia, Maryland, New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut and other colonies travelled to the Delaware River region and settled in the new colony of Pennsylvania and the town of Philadelphia.

1732.—People living on the Potomac River, in Virginia, began to move over the mountains to the valley of the Shenandoah.

1737.—A party of a hundred Potomac families journeyed through this last named region and settled near the present towns of Winchester and Strasburg.

1725-1740.—A steady stream of emigration travelled from Virginia and Pennsylvania into North Carolina.

1735-1740.—Similar groups from Virginia and Pennsylvania moved into South Carolina.

These were not the trifling shifts for short distances, such as were also going on during the constant establishment of new farms and new settlements near older ones. They were long and pretentious travels, often for hundreds of miles, calling for careful and elaborate preparation, the breaking up of homes and the enduring of many trials. They were the first manifestations of the restless desire for movement and change, the somewhere-else feeling, that has ever since been a characteristic of the native

born American. Through them and similar early migrations, accomplished on foot or by the aid of boats and a few horses, marked by hardships and sometimes ending in disaster or disappointment, a better knowledge of the condition and character of the country was gradually obtained by the population.

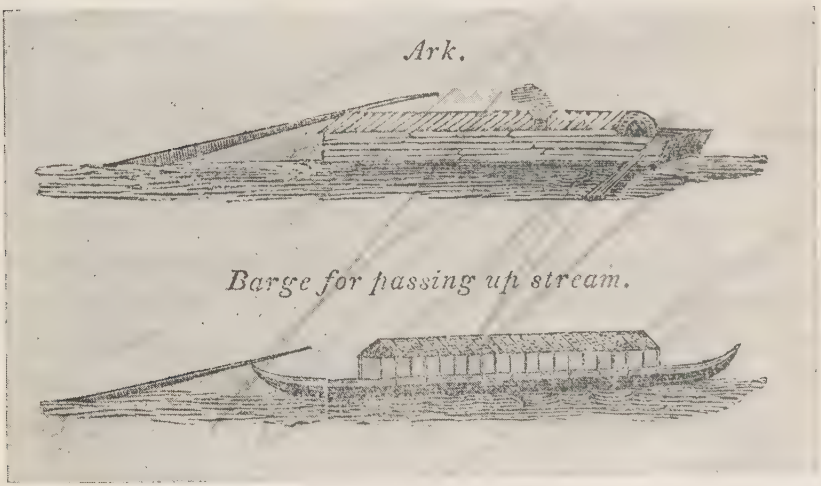
CHAPTER IV

POLE-BOATS AND THE MANNER OF THEIR NAVIGATION — INCREDIBLE LABOR PERFORMED IN USING THEM — THE INFLUENCE OF CONNECTICUT — BEGINNING THE SYSTEMATIC TRANSFORMATION OF INDIAN TRAILS INTO CRUDE ROADS — EARLY FERRIES AROUND BOSTON AND NEW YORK — SEDAN CHAIRS — THE FIRST HORSE VEHICLES AND THEIR TRIUMPH OVER PURITAN PREJUDICE — LAWS AGAINST TRAVEL — THE INTRODUCTION AND EQUIPMENT OF SLEDS — TRAVEL IN WINTER — RESULT OF THE FOUNDING OF PHILADELPHIA — THE EVOLUTION OF THE OLD INDIAN TRAIL ACROSS NEW JERSEY — LONG HORSEBACK JOURNEYS BECOME POSSIBLE — THE ADVENTURES OF MISTRESS KNIGHT OF BOSTON

TWO of the earliest types of river boats that followed the canoe, as the needs of the growing settlements became greater, were probably first used by the pioneers on the Connecticut River. Both sorts of craft with slight modifications were widely adopted in various regions, particularly where the streams were rapid or shallow, and were common throughout the country until after the year 1800.

One was called a pole-boat, from the means by which it was propelled up-stream. Usually made of planks hewed from the pine, it was from twenty to thirty feet long, three to five feet wide, some two or three feet deep,

pointed at both ends, and had a flat bottom. Even when heavily laden it was serviceable in less than a foot of water. Such a boat was navigated down a stream by means of oars or poles with almost no effort, but going back up-stream, especially against a rapid current, was a far different matter. The crew — exclusive of steersman — consisted of four, six or eight men, according to the size of the craft, and each man was armed with a long, stout pole made of ash or hickory, with a heavy, wrought iron spike at one end. There were two methods of propulsion. With an equal number of men standing on each side of the boat, as near to the bow as possible and facing the stern, they would plant their spikes in the bottom of the stream at an angle, and with the upper end of each man's pole against his shoulder they would all walk as far



11.—Early types of river boats used by families on long journeys. They probably originated on the Connecticut and Delaware Rivers. The ark, or flatboat, varied somewhat in form, was built of heavy timbers, and was rarely navigated against the current. The barge, a lighter vessel with canoe-like lines, was pushed up-stream by poles. At first the barge was called a keel-boat and had no covered shelter.

toward the stern as possible.[1] By so doing they pushed the boat out from under their feet in an up-stream direction and propelled it, with each repetition of the process, nearly a boat's length. Two men would then hold the distance gained until the others hurried back to the bow and planted their poles in the bottom again. The second method of advancing consisted in facing the bow of the boat with the workers in two stationary groups, one near the bow and the other near the stern. The groups would push on their poles alternately, with a helmsman to correct the zigzag impulse. The labor necessary for ascending a rapid river in either of these ways was so great as to be beyond exaggeration, yet it was constantly accomplished over long distances, and the method remained in wide fashion for very many years. Men took it for granted there was nothing else to do, and that the same conditions would always prevail.

The other type of early river boat was substantially a duplicate, in form and material, of the one just described. It was, however, about twice as long and wide, and equipped with a mast and sails. When going against the wind the sails were dropped and poles were used, as in the case of the smaller vessel.

The obstruction in the river shown in the illustration, and through which the larger boat is being guided with care and difficulty, is not a natural formation. It is an ancient fish-dam, built by the Indians with boulders gathered from the bed and banks of the river. In the center of such a contrivance the Indians left an opening about six or eight feet wide, and below this gap they constructed, with woven roots, willow branches and such material, a

[1] They moved back and forth on narrow wooden runways, about ten inches wide, that were built on each side of the boat for the purpose.

great basket-like enclosure that reached down-stream a dozen feet, and was tightly joined at each end to the dam. When food was needed a large number of the red men would enter the water and form in line across the stream

A View of the Boats & manner of navigating on the Mohawk River

12.—Two keel-boats ascending a river. Those of large size carried masts, and used sails whenever possible. The curved obstruction in the stream, with an opening in the center, is not a natural formation but an Indian fish-dam built of boulders.

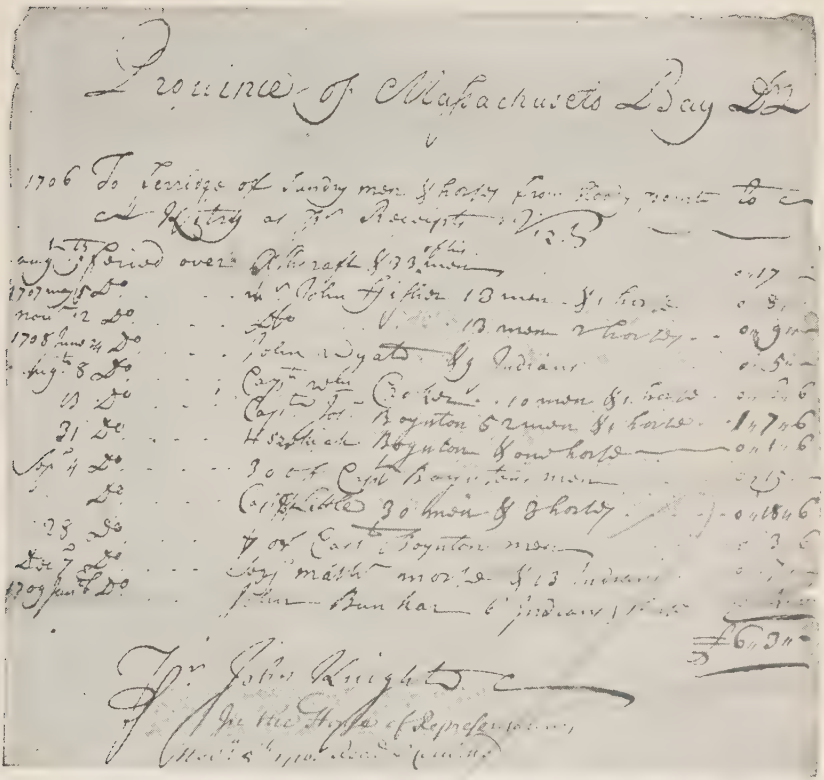
about half a mile above their trap and wade slowly down, kicking and beating the water with sticks as they moved. The frightened fish fleeing before them would finally encounter the dam and be converged by it to the opening, through which they would rush into the woven sack to be scooped out by thousands. In this way did the Indian often do his fishing, much to the embarrassment of future white navigators. Several of these early stone fish-dams still exist in the upper reaches of Tippecanoe River, in northern Indiana, just as they were built by the Potawatomi.

But Connecticut's most important contribution to the

progress of those primitive days did not lie so much in the devising of methods of travel as it did in the remarkable way in which her people wandered over the face of the land. They went everywhere, until at last their universal presence became a proverb in the mouths of the people. Any stranger, any new settler in a community, was dubbed a "Connecticut Yankee," and the chances were that the guess was a good one. From those few square miles there went forth a pioneer influence that was always strong, and sometimes decisive, in shaping the affairs of new regions. The Susquehanna River valley in Pennsylvania, eastern Long Island, western Massachusetts, northern New Jersey, western Vermont, central and western New York and at a later date the Western Reserve of Ohio all were swayed or powerfully affected, in their beginnings, by Connecticut migrations. There is a legend which says that at one time the natives of Connecticut and graduates of Yale College lacked but five of constituting an actual majority of the National Congress.[1]

By the year 1683 the towns of Boston and New York and the new settlement of Philadelphia had become so bustling and important that travel from one to another was a common thing, and necessity began to urge the making of such land highways between them as would permit of regular traffic. Indian trails and paths made by settlers already linked the three centers with a route passable over a part of its extent by horses, though most of the travel from any one of the towns to another was still accomplished by boat. In the cities some of the wealthy and governing classes had been using sedan chairs for a long time, and a few private coaches of various sorts had begun to appear. Boston and New York, because of the numer-

[1] The saying is sometimes attributed to Calhoun.



13.—A bill submitted to Massachusetts Bay Province by Ferryman John Knight of Boston, in 1709, asking payment for services rendered to the Sheraft, military officers and other officials during the preceding three years. He asked £6, 3s, and was allowed £3, 1s, 6d, or just half the amount requested.

ous smaller settlements situated on the waters all around them, had also grappled with the problem of ferry facilities for the primeval suburbanites who lived near by.

In Massachusetts Bay the business of ferrying was given into the hands of watermen who used big barge-like boats capable of carrying horses and goods as well as men. One of these ferry owners was a certain John Knight, and a bill rendered by him for work performed is herein reproduced. It indicates that he had allowed the

account to run for more than two years, since the first entry, for ferrying "a Sheraft and 33 of his men" is dated in August of 1706, and the last, for transporting "John Eunker, 6 Indians and 1 horse" has the date of January, 1709. The total bill was but six pounds and three shillings, or about thirty dollars. Ferryman Knight duly presented his account to the authorities, and owing to the scarcity of paper the House of Representatives of the colony used the other side of the bill itself for the formal engrossment of its action thereon. The resolution, duly signed by the Speaker and Secretary of the House, shows

14.—The flatboat with a sail is one of the first city ferry boats, like those used in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and other coast towns until about 1800.

that Knight was allowed for his work the sum of "three pounds, one shilling and six pence," or exactly one-half of the amount called for by his bill.

The ferries in use on the waters around New York

City, or some of them at least, were similar barges, equipped with sails. Such was the ferry boat to Brooklyn. Owing to the strong tides and currents and the squalls of wind for which the bay has always been noted, many capsizings and other accidents in which men and beasts were sometimes drowned, attended the history of the early New York ferries.

The sedan chairs in which certain of the wealthy people and official classes were accustomed to travel about the towns were commonly carried by servants, though vehicles of a type resembling the one made for Pastor Hooker's wife, and borne by a single horse, were also in use. Such things as sedan chairs were distinctly an importation — in idea at least — from Europe, though they were used in America for a long time, chiefly in New York and Philadelphia. Benjamin Franklin rode in a sedan chair, on occasions, as late as the year 1789. One of the earliest of them in English America was that which belonged to Governor Winthrop, of Massachusetts Bay colony. It was a rich and magnificent specimen, originally made at the order of a viceroy of Mexico and intended for some dignitary in Spain. It was found on a Spanish galleon captured by the English and by them presented to Winthrop. He said, in speaking of the gift, that he "had no use for it."

There was more behind that remark of Winthrop's than appears on the surface. Doubtless he would have been glad to move about in comfort in the carved, silver-bedecked and silk-upholstered box, for he was a human being after all, but public opinion and the ruling spirits of the church in the Puritan colony would not have permitted such an action. Men and women of New England were banished, or had their ears cut off, or were hanged

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in those days for offenses scarce more heinous than the use of such a devil's trap as a gaudy sedan chair. Even in 1687, nearly fifty years afterward, the first horse coaches which appeared in Boston were severely frowned upon as contrivances fit for this world only, and their brazen owners were subjected to scorn and derision. But the shameless proprietors of those first vehicles found in the possession of them a solace that was sufficient recompense even for social ostracism. And, sad to relate, others of sufficient wealth were also tempted and fell. The use of horses and coaches continued, and slowly increased. Satan was triumphant.

Outside the towns and their immediate neighborhoods the utility of the first coaches was very limited indeed. Roads were scarcely worthy of the name, and there were no bridges. When a coach came to a stream too deep to be forded it was stood upon its wheels in two parallel canoes, and thus conveyed across. The horses swam.

There were three types of the earliest American wheeled vehicles. One was patterned after the heavy and cumbrous two-horse family carriage that had just come into limited use in England. The others were better adapted to conditions in such new country, and each was drawn by one horse. The first of the Americanized types was called a chair, and the other a chaise. The chair was a two-wheeled vehicle with a seat for two, and sometimes with an additional small seat, almost over the shafts, for the driver. Of this carriage the Canadian caleche was a variety. The chaise was simply a chair with a covered top of leather. None of the earliest specimens had springs, but swung on stout braces of wood or leather that somewhat alleviated the constant jolting. All were made by local blacksmiths and wheelwrights, some of whom built up

reputations by the excellence of their work and thus became the first carriage makers of the country. There was not much change in the three types of vehicles for a hun-

15.—The first wheeled vehicles to appear were a few private coaches, made in the large towns for town use only, late in the seventeenth century. The condition of the roads did not permit their employment elsewhere. A dozen or so vehicles like this existed in Boston, Philadelphia and New York before 1700. They had bodies either of wood or leather and were generally painted in bright colors.

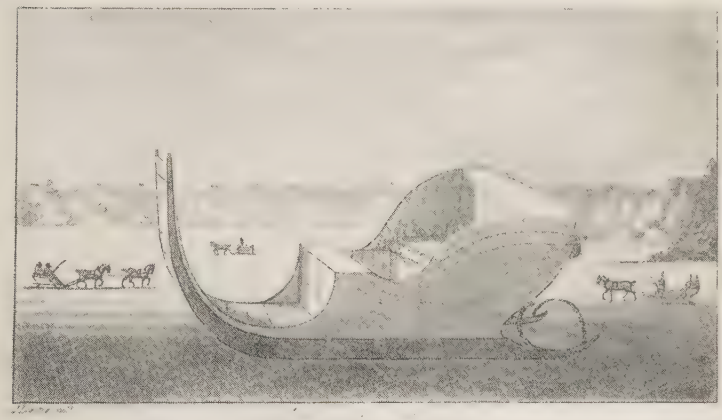
dred years or more, except that they gradually became more ornate in their outward aspect. All through the colonies a tendency toward the use of brighter and still brighter colors, both for personal wear and for application to miscellaneous belongings was apparent for a long time. This trait of the people reached its climax shortly before the days of the Revolution. Its effect on vehicles was seen in their brightly-painted wheels, their bodies of red, yellow, blue or brown, with panels of different hues and trimmings to match. Especially was this craving for warmth of color observable in the middle and southern colonies. And it must have been a dazzling sight to see such equi-

pages in a festal hour with the women in white satin gowns and filmy shoulder veils of purple or emerald green, beside men in lace ruffles, blue coats, yellow waistcoats, knee breeches of buff, scarlet stockings and silver buckles.

Philadelphia possessed about thirty carts and other wheeled vehicles in 1697, and New York also had a number, but the introduction of such things did not proceed with any uniformity throughout the country. In Connecticut, for instance, there were no carriages until about 1750 and few until after the Revolution. When Governor Trumbull of Connecticut visited the town of Norwich during the Revolution he travelled in a chaise, and the people of the village abandoned their affairs with one accord and flocked to behold such an extraordinary contraption. No vehicles were used, or any travelling performed on Sunday in some of the colonies until after the era of independence began. It was prohibited by law. Sunday, by the statutes, commenced at sunset of Saturday and continued until the same time on the Sabbath. On one occasion a man who was about to resume his horseback journey left his tavern on Sunday evening, stood beside the animal and patiently waited until the sun had retired, as he thought, for the night. Then he mounted and rode away. But a moment later one last brief gleam of sunlight broke for an instant from behind the clouds and was spied by a vigilant constable. The traveller was arrested and fined.

Much travelling by land was performed in the winter. During the spring, summer-time and autumn, particularly in the northern colonies, a large part of the population was busy in the work necessary to an agricultural, land-clearing and seafaring community. But winter was the time for recreation and visiting, and for making journeys to

towns where markets could be found for the sale of such commodities as the farmer and his family had produced. In winter the roads of the middle and northern colonies were no longer seas of mud with archipelagos of stumps, but were made smooth and firm with a pavement spread upon them from the sky. The smaller streams and rivers, too, were turned to highways of ice and were often used. Sleighs of various crude and simple types appeared at an early date, and by the year 1700 were in general use. One of the commonest varieties of these vehicles for winter



16.—American colonial sleds were generally called either pungs or pods, though the Canadian cariole was also used. The pungs and pods ordinarily had an open space between the bed of the sled and its runners. Each American type also had a shelf-like extension of the floor beyond its sides for its whole length. Horse-drawn sleds preferred to travel on the smooth surfaces of frozen streams when possible.

travel was an idea adopted[1] from Canada. The Canadians spoke of it as a cariole, but the people of New England, who have always preferred to use home-made names for

[1] With alterations.

things, called a sleigh either a pung or a pod, and found it just as serviceable. They were more concerned with features of utility than with melodious nomenclature. A pung was drawn by two horses; a pod by one. When loaded and equipped for a long journey over the snows a pung must have been an interesting spectacle. In the body of the vehicle sat the farmer's wife, with maybe a child or two, all of them bundled up with coats, blankets, hoods, mittens and mufflers against the sharp air. Around them were heaped the things they had prepared for sale — cheeses, dried herbs, bundles of knitted stockings and mittens, parcels of vegetables, mysterious jugs, flax, and all those other primitive commodities of domestic growth or manufacture — until the whole outfit looked like a miniature mountain on runners. As for the man himself, he trotted alongside. There was no room for him on board. And to the side of every departing pung, as the chiefest part of its equipment for a journey, there was securely tied a huge round chunk of frozen porridge (bean porridge, of course) and a hatchet with which to chop off a chunk of it when any of the travellers might feel the need of nourishment.

No doubt this curious commissary department of an early New England sleigh throws a certain light on that famous old nursery rhyme that runs:

"Bean porridge hot; bean porridge cold;
Bean porridge in the pot, nine days old."

Preliminary to every such trip, and a few days before it, the housewife would cook a big pot of porridge and then, setting it out-of-doors in the kettle, would allow it to ripen and freeze while awaiting the time for the journey to begin. There is no present way of finding out whether the epicures of that period considered nine days

as the most appetizing age for winter bean porridge, but of one thing we may be sure; it was very, very cold.

For short winter trips, or whenever the snow was too soft or deep for horses, snow-shoes were used, and the traveller carried a staff at the bottom of which was fixed a

17.—Winter travel in the northern colonies was performed on foot, or in sleds drawn by dogs or horses. The New England winter pedestrian, in addition to his snow-shoes, was equipped with a pole having a large wooden disc at its bottom for extra support.

wide, flat piece of wood, usually round or oval in shape, as an additional support. Still another means of travel during the winter season was the dog-sled. This method of conveyance was copied from a similar usage of the Indians, who in times of hostility sometimes also employed sleds for transporting their baggage or feeble captives through the wilderness. The dog-sleds were small and simple affairs, consisting of a flat base of pine or spruce about two feet wide, upcurved in front, and with room for but one person to seat himself. From two to six

dogs constituted a team. Although the dog-sled never came into widespread use at any one time or in any given locality, except in the far North and Northwest, it nevertheless persisted in various forms as a vehicle of travel in America for perhaps two hundred years, and is still used in Alaska and Canada.

The establishment of the town of Philadelphia and its rapid growth had exerted a decided influence on the development of land travel in the colonies. By 1690 the place consisted of some six or eight hundred houses, people were journeying to it from all other parts of the country, and there was no longer any doubt that it was on its way toward an assured greatness. Three chief centers of social and commercial activity — New York, the Massachusetts towns and the settlements on the Delaware — then existed in the North, and it was inevitable that they should soon become linked by definite and continuous land routes of travel. The Dutch, who had previously held that part of New Jersey between Amboy on New York Bay and the Delaware River, abandoned the region about the year 1675. At that time it was still a wilderness traversed only by Indian paths and but seldom crossed by white men. The main trail of the aborigines extended through the territory from Elizabethport, near New York Bay, and proceeding by way of the future settlements of New Brunswick and Trenton, finally reached the Delaware River. Such, then, was the route by which the colonists travelled overland between New York and Philadelphia in 1675. They made the journey on foot if they went at all, and under ordinary circumstances were from three to five days on the road.

It was this path of the Indians which was adopted as the best line for a steam railroad across New Jersey a hun-

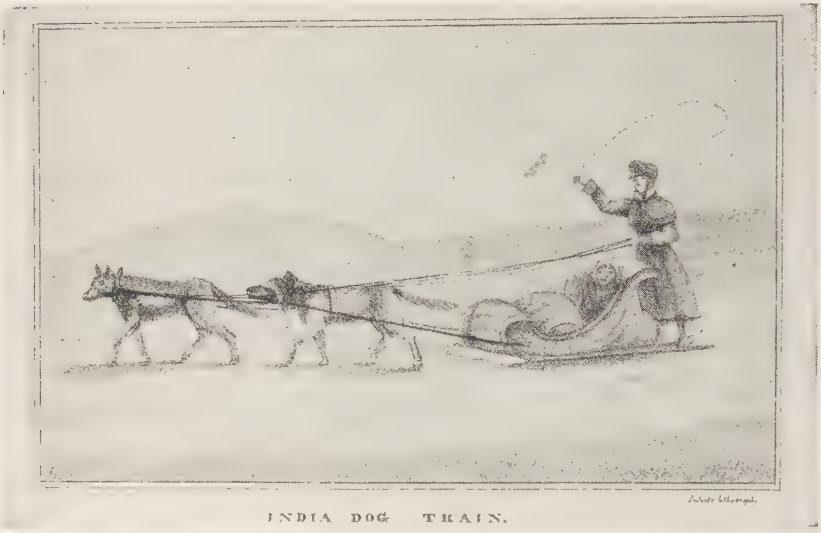
dred and sixty years afterward, and it was exactly above the same old historic travel route, two hundred and thirty-five years afterward, that a flying-man made the first flight on schedule time ever performed. On that occasion an aeroplane was driven in an uninterrupted journey from New York to Philadelphia in an hour and fifty minutes as announced in advance, or five minutes faster than the running time of the swiftest regular railroad train between the two cities.[1] Such things, however, did not abide within the philosophy of the red men. To them belongs the credit of pointing out the best paths, but we use the information in our own peculiar way. They went beneath the trees. We can go above.

By about the year 1682 the people of the Delaware River towns were beginning to open short roads between their various settlements, and the roads were gradually followed by local vehicle traffic for small distances. The few wagons or carts were very crude and awkward, had immensely wide wheels, and were most used in going to previously arranged gatherings that were sure to be attended by considerable numbers of people. The inhabitants of Burlington, for example, held fairs at stated intervals, to which the inhabitants of other settlements travelled in order to buy or exchange commodities or to visit friends and relatives.

Little by little the roads in all settled parts of the colonies were extended by the coöperation of communities and through individual labor, until in a few years continuous horseback journeys between Boston and Philadelphia were possible with comparative ease. But since all intending travellers did not own horses it often happened that a party of four would set out for a common destina-

[1] Hamilton's flight of June 13, 1910.

tion with one horse. In such a case it was the practice for two to mount and ride a couple of miles, leaving the others to follow on foot. Then the riders would dismount, tie the horse by the roadside and continue on foot in their turn until the others, having reached the animal and mounted it, would overtake them. In that manner they proceeded, with considerable satisfaction to all concerned except the



18.—The dog-sled, or Indian dog train, was used when the snow was too deep or too soft to uphold horses. Such a sled was six or seven feet long, and its bottom was made of smooth planks. The title on the original engraving is a misprint.

fifth member of the party. Two travelling together also used the same system if but one horse was available. In the year 1702 a woman went on horseback from Boston to Philadelphia and carried a baby in her lap for the entire distance. That was a notable occurrence. When a man and his wife rode one horse the man, in a saddle, sat as usual, and the woman was perched behind him on a

cushion called a pillion. The woman's pillion was strapped to the motive power of the expedition, and below it, on one side, was hung a narrow wooden platform for her feet.

A school-teacher — Mrs. Knight — who travelled from Boston to New York on horseback in the year 1704 wrote a little book describing her trip, and her narrative contains much interesting information regarding the character and manners of the people she met on the way, as well as a recital of the experiences which she encountered. It is related by her that on one occasion she came to an inn late at night, and desiring shelter, summoned the inmates. Finally the landlady appeared, but instead of immediately bustling about to make the guest comfortable, and postponing a manifestation of her interest in the arrival, she planted herself immovably on the solid rock of her feminine curiosity and began:

"Law for me! What in the world brings you here this time of night? I never saw a woman on the Rode so Dreadful late in all my versall life! Who are you? Where are you going?" And so on. But Mrs. Knight, being a schoolmistress, finally passed the examination and got to bed.

On the same trip she met a man and his daughter, riding on separate horses. The girl had only a bag for a saddle, and Mrs. Knight heard her plaintively say: "Lawful heart, father! This bare mare hurts me dingily. I'm dreadful sore, I vow." It was small wonder she was uncomfortable, for it developed that she and her father had been jogging along for thirty miles.

Mrs. Knight also gave her opinion of the canoe, whose erratic propensities as a vehicle filled her with misgivings. Coming to a stream she was compelled to embark

in one of the craft for transportation to the other side, and she said of it: "The Cannoo was very small and shallow, which greatly terrify'd me and caused me to be very circumspect, sitting with my hands fast on each side, my eyes steady, not daring so much as to lodge my tongue a hair's breadth more on one side of my mouth than t'other. A very thought would have oversett our wherry."

It is the little incidents like these — little bits from the actual experiences of those distant times — which best reveal the travel conditions that then prevailed. But such records are, unfortunately, all too rare. It usually happens in searching through the narratives of early travellers, no matter in what form they may be found, that the record tells of leaving a certain place on a certain day and of reaching another place in the course of time, but nothing else. Of the adventures and conditions encountered, the expedients and methods used during the journey there are few details given, or none at all.

CHAPTER V

ANOTHER ELEMENT IN THE PROBLEM — EARLY CONDITIONS PROFOUNDLY INFLUENCED BY THE NATIVE INHABITANTS — THE STRATEGIC GEOGRAPHICAL POSITIONS HELD BY THE INDIANS — THEIR EARLY ATTITUDE TOWARD WHITE MEN — NATURE OF INDIAN PROPRIETORSHIP OVER LANDS — COVETOUSNESS OF THE WHITES — DEVELOPMENT OF NATIVE PREJUDICE TOWARD ENGLISH TRAVEL MOVEMENT AND ITS CAUSES — TREATMENT OF EACH RACE BY THE OTHER — A CENTURY AND A HALF OF CONFLICT — BLOCKHOUSES — EFFECT OF EUROPEAN POLITICS AND INTERCOLONIAL JEALOUSIES — FIRST SYMPTOMS OF THE IMPENDING WESTWARD MOVEMENT APPEAR — THE DOMINATION OF THE WHITE RACE INEVITABLE

THUS far, while tracing the earliest growth of a system of internal communications destined to develop from such crude beginnings into the most extensive and valuable series of public works ever constructed by men, whose relation to the national life has finally become one of the principal social and industrial problems at present existing, it has only been necessary to consider the primitive needs of our forefathers and the first devices created or adapted to meet those necessities.

But the growth of the white man's travel system in America and his subjugation of the continent by its use

was, in its first stages, a matter of somewhat more complexity than has as yet been suggested. Progress in the early days did not depend solely on the creation and extension of thoroughfares and the successive introduction of new and better types of vehicles. There was yet another element in the problem, one that exerted a strong and at times decisive influence for generations. That factor was the Indian. And since no complete picture of the white man's aspiration for movement and of the travel conditions that existed until comparatively recent days can be drawn without introducing the native occupants and original owners of the territory involved, it is well to turn for a time from the primary question of routes and vehicles in order to observe why — and to what degree — the population movements of early times were influenced by the white man's copper-colored antagonist.

The Indians of the eastern part of the continent, when the first permanent white men's settlements were made in that region, had seemingly occupied the land, unaffected by any outside or visiting influence of importance, for several thousands of years. They had perhaps been here, slowly ascending from a very primitive level, since that period when mastodons were common, when Niagara Falls did not exist,[1] and possibly even since the time when Lakes Erie and Ontario, as one body of water, had their drainage westwardly through the Wabash River, thence into the Ohio and the Mississippi. Collectively these native Americans had held undisputed possession of the continent, and with the lapse of many centuries the various tribes into which the race had broken up had acquired, in a certain sense, recognized title to the territories they severally held.

[1] About seven thousand to ten thousand years ago.

Such titles were not the precise recorded legal instruments of white civilization, but were established or altered by occupation, treaties and strength of arms, and were maintained by coöperative action based on tribal government or by the still more powerful joint action of federations of tribes. Regions so held were sometimes roughly bounded by natural lines such as mountains, lakes, or conspicuous landmarks, and — howsoever delimited — the adjoining tribes, save in time of war, respected the territorial rights or pretensions of their neighbors. Sometimes a region was made neutral by the tacit or formal agreement of many tribes and used by them for a common purpose, such as hunting. The lands lying in the present state of Kentucky were an uninhabited territory, so rich in game that no tribe was allowed their exclusive control. In short, the use, dominion over and occupancy of land and favorable locations was a subject on which the Indians placed a high importance.

Themselves accustomed to great distances and long journeys, the Indians had, as has been suggested, an unerring appreciation of the importance of good lines of communication and the best and easiest travel routes. The strongest and most influential tribes and confederations lived on or near important rivers, bays or lakes, or in territory that offered the easiest means of subsistence and travel. The Indians were economic strategists. When the white men came they found the natives were established in those localities that seemed most desirable for white settlement. The red men had already seen the advantages of such locations as Delaware and Chesapeake Bays, the Delaware, Susquehanna and Potomac Rivers, New York harbor, the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers,

Massachusetts Bay,[1] and the easily traversed route, through what is now New York state, from the upper Hudson to the westward by way of the Great Lakes. This last mentioned region was occupied by the most powerful and best organized group of Indians in eastern North America, the League of the Iroquois, a confederation,

19.—A horse-barrow. Crude home-made barrows, carts and wagons slowly developed, outside the towns, wherever conditions made them useful. Thereafter they showed but slight improvement for more than a century. The wheels of many barrows and carts consisted of solid sections of tree trunks, and were from six to twelve inches in width. Original sketch by the early American artist, Joshua Shaw. One of eleven recently found drawings by the same artist, reproduced in these pages and depicting conditions of pioneer life and travel.

at that time, of five strong tribes whose common affairs were administered by a central council made up of delegates from each.

The first human quality which seriously affected intercourse between the natives and the white strangers was covetousness. The newcomers wanted—and determined to possess—those choice territorial tidbits which the

[1] Modern names for these localities are used, instead of those given by the natives or early explorers, in order that they may be more quickly identified. The native name for the Connecticut River, for instance, was "Quinni-tukq-ut," or "Quoneh-ta-cut," and the Dutch called it "De Versche Riviere."

Indians equally esteemed as desirable regions for habitation. At once began the long history of negotiation, treaty and purchase, inevitable as a phenomenon of human progress but too often defiled by the sordidness of power, by which the country passed piecemeal into the possession of the white race. It is true the newcomers acknowledged that ownership of the lands was vested in the native occupants, and that they usually paid for the territories, in a technical sense, under terms of formal purchase. But it was the white men who demanded to buy.[1] It was the white men who fixed the purchase price, and the red men who realized what refusal would mean. The occupation of continents and the sway of white skins over dark skins is determined by laws not passed by legislatures. The unfortunate effect upon the red men of the process by which they were stripped of their possessions was the speedy creation of a hostility — always existent thereafter in at least a passive sense and often fanned into warfare by imposition or pressure upon them — toward the movements of the white men. For the Indians soon saw that much white travel resulted in more demands to buy land, more purchases, permanent white occupation and a curtailment of their own territory and natural means of subsistence. The presence of white men meant the absence of game, and Indian poverty.

That conception of the red man which has been summed up in the ethnological proverb, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian," runs somewhat wide of the truth. It is not too much to say that in the early days of their association with the English speaking colonists, the native Americans compared rather favorably with the strangers in the exhibition of those human qualities

[1] Reference is made to the English speaking colonies and colonists.

that inspire confidence and serve to distinguish honor and fair dealing from duplicity. When an Indian and a white man were about to engage in a transaction involving something of value owned by the native and coveted by the Caucasian, it was for a long time a common custom to make the Indian drunk as a preliminary to the negotiation. Peter Kalm, in his *Voyage to North America,* refers to this practise, and says: "Many persons have assured me that the Indians are frequently cheated in disposing of their goods, especially when they are in liquor, and that sometimes they do not get one-half or one-tenth of the value of their goods. I have been witness to several transactions of this kind."[1]

When a white man had a just grievance against a native and the attention of the offending Indian's tribe was called to the matter, the chiefs of his clan compelled the culprit to make restitution and often visited upon him a severe penalty.[2] The Iroquois held deceit in such abhorrence that on some occasions they punished lying with the penalty of death. Among the early colonists the personal accountability code of the Indians was not looked upon with favor for use in dealing with offenders of the white race. As a consequence the estimation in which the newcomers were held by the natives was lowered. Under normal conditions, and in dealing with colonists who did not impose on them, the Indians as a race were hospitable and kind to the limit of their opportunities. In their sight, at first, a white man was pre-

[1] An Indian once said to Sir William Johnson (England's agent in dealing with the northern natives): "You English buy territory by the use of the bottle."
"With liquor as the bartering medium, nothing could save the Indian from wrong."
—Winsor, in "The Westward Movement."

[2] This attitude of the natives gradually ceased. The authorities of the colonies got into the habit of disowning the white trouble-makers along the border, and of disavowing responsibility for their unfair or unlawful acts. Trespassers on Indian lands sometimes committed their outrages at such a distance from the hand of authority that it was impossible to catch the culprits even if the desire to do so existed. So the natives followed the example of the whites, and took the same position.

sumed to be a good man, kindly disposed. If he proved himself to be bad, that was another matter. There were bad men on both sides. But the Indian had to prove himself, against open prejudice, to be good. Occasionally and after long effort he was successful, but it was a hard matter at best, and from the chronicles that have come down from those times it is apparent that such attempts on his part, even when sincere and justified by the facts, failed more often than they succeeded.

One of the best records of the relative viewpoints from which each race regarded the other lies in the words spoken to Conrad Weiser, an early traveller, by Canassatego, the Onondaga chief who was his host. "If a white man in travelling through our country," said the savage to the civilized man, "enters one of our cabins, we treat him as I do you. We dry him, if he is wet; we warm him, if he is cold; and give him meat and drink that he may allay his hunger and thirst, and we spread soft furs for him to rest and sleep on. We demand nothing in return. But if I go into a white man's house and ask for victuals and drink, they say, 'Where is your money?' and if I have none they say, 'Get out, you Indian dog.'" Whatever value Canassatego's words may have as a possible illumination of Indian character does not lie in the manner of their utterance but in the philosophy that inspired them. Few Indians could have spoken thus, but there is much evidence to indicate that the Indians as a race felt as he did, until their character and attitude, in so far as relations with white men were concerned, were much changed by long brooding on imposition and the impending wreck of their birthright.

The things that resulted in enmity between the red men and the white are not hard to define. They were a

failure by the bulk of the newcomers to understand the viewpoint of the natives with respect to the ownership of the country and the effect of white men's presence in it, and the display, on the part of the strangers, of motives and methods that antagonized both the philosophy and material interests of the original inhabitants. Whenever it happened, in the earlier days of their association, that a white man treated his Indian neighbors as decent fellow men, and not as dangerous creatures that should be removed from the face of nature, such a white man was esteemed as a friend. Accounts of the early troubles between the races, having all been prepared and handed down by one party to the controversies, can be depended on as reliable and conservative whenever they give praise to the opposition. And narratives of the sort, written by colonists, contain the record — sometimes by inference and sometimes frankly — of native traits such as are here outlined. In later years, unhappily, a white man was often considered to be an enemy simply because he was white, just as a colonist looked on an Indian as an enemy because he was an Indian.

Civilization in its final aspect is not demonstrated by the possession and operation of railroads, steamboats and flying machines. We may with safety say, despite a considerable lingering impression to the contrary, that further and greater progress can be made by the use of more intangible elements than these. The Indians had not progressed in mechanical ingenuity to the point that we have reached, nor could they, but in one sense their cultural state surpassed that of the race which was to overthrow them. Their age-long battle with and study of Nature had woven into their character a consideration of the common welfare, a man-to-man accountability for

20.—The Yarmouth Coach, which originated in England, was a very small, cart-like pleasure conveyance, with two broad-tired wheels. When similar vehicles were employed for more serious purposes in America the standing driver ceased to appear.

word and act, a disdain of petty evasion, an ability to discern motive, and a keenness in separating honesty from hypocrisy and friend from foe, that excelled the similar attributes possessed by the white-skinned men who appeared among them. The strangers from abroad, though they did not realize it, were under one disadvantage. Their methods of life — their civilization — had blunted in them those qualities in which the Indians were supreme. That was why the Indians as a race did not get along in their dealings with the white men as a race. There was no common footing, either of character or material interests, on which both could stand. The whites

thought the Indians were children; heathen. But it was the Indians who were wise in their comprehension of the significance of events, and the strangers who were blind.

So the colonists came and settled down. Around them was the wilderness. That they could see, for it was tangible. It held them back, but it stood still when attacked and could be slowly demolished as occasion required. The other barrier which surrounded them was one they felt, rather than saw. From the most northern settlements in Maine to Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia, an elastic and tightly drawn cordon of native influence stretched close around them and hampered them. From it came forth a ceaseless constriction, manifested in many ways, against their free and general progress about the country. The restraint irritated and angered them, and when the strain and bickering reached a certain point, as it often did, there came an open rupture and fighting.

Sometimes the restraint exerted by the Indians was due, in whatever form it took, to preconcerted action, but its underlying origin and motive—no matter whether it was the act of one or many, whether spontaneous or planned — was a general realization by the whole native population of the continental menace that confronted them. The natives looked into the future and saw, perhaps before the white men did, what was happening. Therefore it was not the individual traveller in whose path obstacles were laid. There was nothing immediate to fear from an individual. He would return whence he came. The two things that brought alarm and sadness to the souls of the Indians were bulk-movements of the white men and any manifestation of a desire to creep toward the West. Thus it was that the early extensive

travelling of the whites, as we have seen, was performed in parties sufficiently large to insure mutual support and safety in case of need. And all the influence of the natives — in which they were greatly aided for a time by the physical barrier of the Appalachian Mountains — was exerted in keeping the tide of travel movement confined to a north-and-south direction along the narrow coastal region some hundred and fifty miles in width. Had that native influence not been exerted, both by the display of strong and ceaseless objection and the use of their land titles as a barrier, a general travel toward the West must have taken place many years before it actually began. But so long as the colonies remained divided — although they several times tried to unite in a diplomatic sense to oppose the Indian policy — the native strategy prevailed. It was not until a more centralized government and a deeper feeling of American solidarity came into existence and devoted the joint energies of all the states to the effort, that the stubborn native opposition to widespread travel was finally broken down, and the westward movement became national in its character.

Unknown thousands died in those outbreaks of border warfare that lasted for a century and three-quarters, and at times certain regions were for a while swept clear of their Caucasian inhabitants. But the final result was always the same. The white race, in its contact with other men, has been a glacier whose implacable and grinding advance makes up the chief part of recorded history, and the moraines that mark its progress are forts and guns. There was no exception here in America. No matter how severe the setback was, other white men came in force enough to guarantee safety and reoccupy the devastated and deserted territory. They rebuilt the

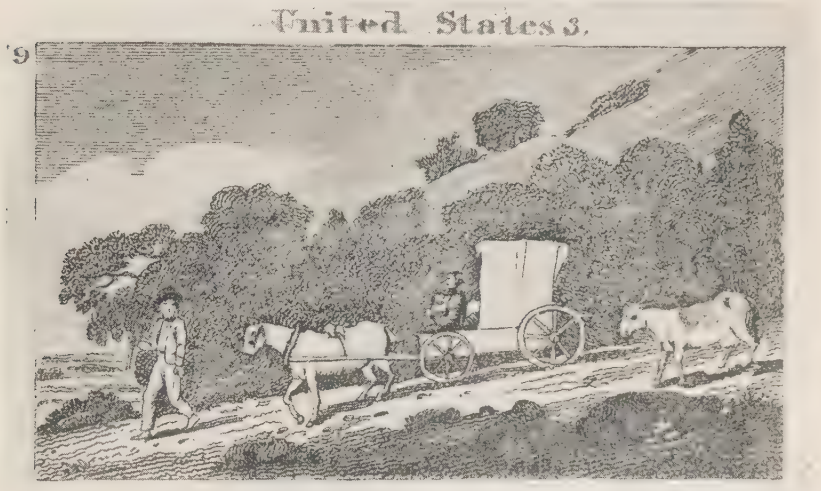
burned log dwellings and set up little fortifications which they called blockhouses, strongly made of huge hewn timbers, with loopholes for rifles and usually with a projecting upper story from which fighters could command the entrances below. In the course of time the outlying districts and main travel routes throughout all the region held by the whites were dotted with such blockhouses, into which the population could retire if it became necessary. Those structures, and the larger palisaded or smooth timber forts which were also built, were long an essential feature of American life and movement.

Many times it happened that a party of travellers journeying through the wilderness learned from some swift courier that hostilities had begun, and their leisurely advance changed upon the instant to wild flight toward the nearest blockhouse and safety. Usually they gained the refuge, there to be held in siege while the rifles without which no men went abroad were used against other and duskier men who claimed the territory they had invaded. At other times the travellers did not reach the little forts in season, and vanished into the forest as captives or else went forth upon a yet longer journey — from which there could be no return.

It seems probable that for a short period after their first coming the various colonies entertained a belief that they could go their own way without much relation with the Indians beyond such association as they themselves decreed, or as was necessary in exchanging trinkets for square miles; that they might consider the natives as part of the surrounding scenery. This hope — to whatever extent it existed — speedily disappeared, and the newcomers came to a realization that their contact with

the original proprietors of the continent was the chief problem of their domestic affairs. Then began a prolonged period during which the power and territorial location of the Indians gradually became an element in the vast and complicated game of international politics wherein France, England and Spain were the contestants, and North America was the prize for which they struggled.

Wheedled by gifts, by crafty appeals to their tribal animosities, by the blandishment of honeyed words and promises not always meant to be fulfilled; in short, by all



21.—The first four-wheeled wagons were small, with flat beds and straight body lines. They were often covered, in whole or in part, with tops of home-made linsey-woolsey designed as a protection for women and children. The men walked.

those arts of civilization which white men can employ with such proficiency in like emergencies when dealing with aborigines, the Indians became catspaws for the contending forces that coveted their dominion and sought

their undoing. To this state of affairs was added the constant demand, by the English speaking colonies, for "more land; more land."

The purpose of the Indians in thus taking sides with some white men against others — after realizing that all the strangers could not be got rid of — was clear. If a group of tribes decided as a result of conference that the French would be better permanent neighbors than the English, and had a chance to destroy the English, then they helped France. Often they decided the other way, and acted accordingly. And of all those native decisions none approached, in its importance and effect on American affairs, the determination of the League of the Iroquois to oppose the ambitions of the French and remain on a friendly footing with the English, if possible.[1] The geographical position of the native confederation has already been outlined. When, in addition, it is kept in mind that any travel by white men on Lakes George, Champlain, Ontario and Erie, the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, the upper Susquehanna and Delaware Rivers, or through the entire territory stretching westward from Albany to the neighborhood of the present city of Cleveland, was for a long time dependent on their willingness and consent, the power of the Iroquois as a factor in the early mobility of the white men will be understood. So great was their influence, and so wide the recognition of it, that they came to be known as the Keepers of the Highway of America. The governors of Pennsylvania, Vir-

[1] It is not meant that the Iroquois wished to be on friendly footing with the English colonists, but with the English government. That confederation, and many other tribes as well, considered themselves to be—and in some few respects were—on a political equality with the white colonies in so far as relations with England were concerned. For a considerable time prior to the Revolution England dealt with the natives not through the colonies, but more or less directly. One of her chief embarrassments over American affairs was the constant conflict between the two races and the native demand for protection against the encroachments of the colonists. In the Revolution many Iroquois fought on the side of the English against the Americans.

ginia, New York, Maryland, and perhaps of other colonies came to treat with them — did not summon the Iroquois, but went in person to them.

The story of the beginning of the unfriendly attitude of the Iroquois toward the French is an interesting one, relevant to the subject under consideration. In the summer of 1609, while the explorer Champlain was on his way through the country in search of knowledge that might aid France in her plans for the control of America, he fell in with some Hurons who were going to fight the Iroquois. From the Hurons he learned of the lake that now bears his name, and also of Lake George, the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, Lake Ontario, and the strategic travel route leading toward the West of which those waters were a part. The tribes that inhabited and controlled the important region in question, he was told, were the ones with which his native companions were at odds. Champlain and the Hurons continued to travel together, and one day they came upon a party of Iroquois. The French explorer and his fellow countrymen were of course provided with firearms, and though the Iroquois were not his enemies he fired upon them. It was quite safe to do so, and the act was an adventure that relieved the monotony of the march. The Iroquois fled. Before the terrible bang-stick of the white man the legs of two warriors standing afar off became as the stems of broken flowers, and they fell down dead. The Indians could not cope with a weapon like that, but the story of its existence and use went through the wilderness and the relationship between France and the Five Nations was fixed. For nearly a hundred and fifty years afterward the effect of that prejudice was still apparent, despite many later efforts of France to secure the Iroquois as allies.

It is useless to speculate on what might afterward have taken place had not that early antagonism of the Iroquois against the French been created by Champlain's act. History is a hen that sits upon the eggs of opportunity and chance, and the events she hatches are a strange brood. Had the French, from their position in Canada, secured the lasting coöperation of the Iroquois they could in that manner have held the region whose control was to determine the destiny of the continent.

One aspect of colonial affairs which for a long time played into the hands of the Indians was a sort of complex jealousy the colonies had of one another and that prevented them, save on unusual occasions, from acting in unison. Each colony feared that the schemes of consolidation from time to time proposed would deprive it of various privileges of self-government which it insisted on and held in high esteem. There were also numerous acute and long continued quarrels between some of the colonial governments, especially those of Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and Connecticut, over boundary lines and the political future of the territory toward the West. But despite these matters the colonists did occasionally try to present a united front in their dealings with the natives. Six times within a period of sixty-seven years — in 1684, 1694, 1711, 1722, 1748 and 1751 — there were gatherings or congresses held to negotiate with the Keepers of the Highway. The population was growing; the developing spirit of nationality had already created a cleavage between the interests of England and America, and a restless tendency to move and spread out became more and more apparent.

As early as the year 1753 a dribble of white men began from Pennsylvania and Maryland into the region around

the headwaters of the Ohio River, constituting a movement toward the West instead of in the old north-and-south groove. The French and Indian War and Pontiac's uprising delayed but did not prevent the white occupation. The Indians protested, and in 1768 there was another conclave at Fort Pitt between the Iroquois, Shawnees and Delawares, and the white men. The meeting was due to the alarm of the Indians over increasing encroachments on their territory and the killing of natives by invading whites. Among the subjects considered at the congress of the races were land titles, outrages committed against the natives and the privilege of unhampered travel. The white authorities apologized for previous murders and the Delaware chieftain — Beaver — finally grasped the wampum belt of peace and said: "Take hold of the end of this belt, which we may stretch along the road between us, in order that we may all travel it in peace and safety."

Thus another agreement was made by which the colonies promised to respect the territorial interests of the red men. The Indians, as they understood existing conditions, were well within their prerogatives in making protest at invasion, since the British government had recognized the rights of the Indians to undisturbed occupancy of all the lands west of the Alleghany Mountains, and by a proclamation issued in 1763 had fixed the western bounds of the white colonies at the natural line formed by the range in question. But the forces that were at work and the conditions that existed were too elemental to be controlled and directed by the routine methods of organized society. A king who lived across the seas could not be the stage manager of the drama whose preliminary scenes were being enacted here. Its development was

dependent on things that had happened before ever there was an England; on processes which took place in that remote and geologic time when men of fair skins and gray eyes came out of savagery and found within themselves a desire to rule and the power to destroy their duskier fellows. Here was a virgin continent, rich beyond conjecture, and owned by a handful of lowlier men whose hue was the pronouncement of their doom. Beside them had become entrenched a horde of the restless and all-pervading race, smitten once more with the fever of conquest that surges in its blood and whose impatience at the limitations to its movement and dominion was swiftly reaching a stage at which transmutation into action would begin. Against such an impulse the ordinary machinery of political government and the decrees of kings could have no effect. As well might an effort be made to stop the sweep of an ocean's tide by aldermanic resolution.

Like pent-up waters that can no longer be contained in the reservoir designed to hold them, the white men overflowed the mountains. The little vanguard of a coming army was not content, as others had been, to find new homes within the coast region so long overrun by the whites, but with one long leap penetrated far into the wilderness. The founding of Pittsburgh furnishes an illustration of the distances to which those pioneers travelled through unknown country. There was as yet no outright breaking of the dam; no advance which resembled a human flood sweeping through the immense and gloomy forests. That was to come a little later. But the period of shoulder-to-shoulder life was passing away, and between the older regions along the Atlantic and those new and wilder lands where the first interior settle-

22.—A New England two-wheeled ox-cart. Used for nearly two centuries as a means of transport between farms and villages lying within a day's journey. The scene is in New Haven, with some buildings of Yale College in the background.

ments were planted there intervened a wilderness some two hundred miles in width that was without white habitation.

There were native protests, bloody reprisals, more conferences, and in 1768 an important new treaty was signed at Fort Stanwix giving to the white men all the country south and east of a line which began on the Ohio River at the mouth of the Cherokee River,[1] that continued up the Ohio to Pittsburgh, thence up the Alleghany to Kittanning, thence overland to the most western branch of the Susquehanna (in New York), thence to Awandoe Creek and the upper Delaware, and finally up the Delaware to a point near Fort Stanwix. For their title to this territory, which included large parts of the present states of New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee, the white men paid to the Indians about fifty thousand dollars and pledged themselves that no colonists should travel, for purposes of settlement, either north or west of the line which fixed its limits. All territory north and west of the line was confirmed to the Indians.

But friction still continued, and in 1774 the conflict known in history as Dunmore's[2] War broke out. The immediate event which aroused the Indians to a fury and caused them, under the leadership of the Shawnee war chief — Cornstalk — to fight one of the very few pitched battles in their history, was the murder by white frontiersmen of all the family and relatives of the Iroquois chief Logan. Logan was a friend of the white race. He was a native who possessed a sufficient loftiness of character to forgive the murder of some others of his kinsfolk by

[1] As the Tennessee River was then known.
[2] Lord Dunmore was the governor of Virginia at the time. The wrath of the Indians was directed toward the settlers of that province, and Virginia white men were the only colonists who fought.

settlers at an earlier day. His sense of honor, and his dignity, fairness, loyalty and kindness had won for him the admiration and respect of many prominent white men. One day in April of 1774 a party of nine Indians, including men, women and babies, and embracing all of Logan's family, left his village[1] and set out on a friendly visit to the trading camp of a white man named Greathouse with whom they were on good terms, and whom they often went to see. There the grown up natives were made drunk, and when they had become helpless and easy to despatch, Greathouse and two of his companions killed the whole lot, not omitting the children.

So began Dunmore's War. Indian runners sped through all the trails of the forest, leaving the news at every little village of native huts and rushing on again, while the warriors who listened to the tidings they brought were on the way to join Logan and Cornstalk almost before the messengers had vanished in the shadows that swallowed them. When Logan was told what had been done he became a madman. The color of a man's skin makes small difference when he hears a story like that.

Logan went to war in his turn.[2] His friendship for the whites was changed to hatred, and with the vision of his murdered kin before him he killed with ferocity and joy. While the madness lasted he revelled in blood. But the war ended, as usual, in the defeat of the red men before the rifles of the Virginians, and after the overthrow of the Indians in a pitched battle near the Ohio River a peace was concluded between Governor Dunmore and the natives. Logan refused to attend the treaty negotiations, saying that he was a warrior and not a diplomat

[1] At Yellow Creek on the upper Ohio River.
[2] In the eyes of Indians, and according to their immemorial practise, such an act was war.

whose only strength lay in his tongue. He sent to the conference, instead, the message known as Logan's Speech, a few brief words in explanation of his position that have from that day taken rank as perhaps the loftiest utterance made by a native American. So profound was the impression the message created at the conference that the white men who were there assembled — all of whom had known and esteemed Logan — sat up half the night beside their camp-fires in order to talk about it and commit it to memory.

By the terms of the treaty that ended Dunmore's War the white population of the colonies was granted permission to navigate the Ohio River without molestation by the natives, and one more step was thereby taken in the travel movement toward the West. So the white men's boats, cumbrous, uncouth of aspect, yet freighted with the restless energy and strength of a conquering people, floated out at last on the waters of the Beautiful River. It was also agreed in the treaty that no northern Indians were to go south of the Ohio, and that no white men should thereafter penetrate into the native territories north of that stream.

Such was the situation just previous to the Revolution, whose near approach was already apparent. With the outbreak of that struggle all lesser affairs, including the relations between colonies and Indians, and the questions bearing on safe and improved travel conditions throughout the country were swept aside, not again to be taken up until the outcome of the struggle for political independence should be determined.

The Indians as a rule took sides with England during the contest[1] and fought against the colonial forces. Their

[1] Some Indian nations remained neutral.

action in that respect was understandable in view of what had gone before, for whatever protection they had secured in their quarrels with the colonials had been due to action by the British government itself and its crown repre-

23.—The Canadian caleche, which was used in northern New England, gradually evolved into one of the early colonial two-wheeled vehicles called the chair. When equipped with a linsey-woolsey or leather cover the chair became a chaise. See illustrations Nos. 59 and 156.

sentatives on this side of the water. The Continental Congress and its agents made efforts to secure Indians as allies for the colonies against the English, but with such small success that the attempt was soon given up as hopeless. The red men understood that overtures from the new American government were not prompted by friendliness, but by desperate need. And in addition to the native memory of past grievances an incident which happened early in the war made any such alliance out of the question, even if otherwise possible.

Among those Indian nations whose head men sought to keep out of the struggle between England and her revolting possessions were the Shawnees, of which Cornstalk was a leader. But the hot bloods among the Shawnees, eager for revenge against the colonists, were for fighting under the Cross of Saint George. In an effort to maintain peace between his people and the colonials Cornstalk went on a visit of friendliness to a fort of the American troops, taking with him Redhawk and another chief. To the Americans he explained the situation, saying that though many of the Shawnee fighting men wanted war, he and the other leaders were against a clash and hoped to prevent it. He also said, as any man in his position would do, that in case his best efforts were unsuccessful he would be in honor bound to fight at the head of his warriors. On those words the white Americans seized Cornstalk and the other two visitors and imprisoned them as hostages.[1]

Thereupon the Shawnees went to war against the colonists, and soon killed a soldier of the fort where Cornstalk was held prisoner. When a party of the other soldiers found their dead comrade they ran with one accord toward the fort and rushed in with a tumult. Cornstalk heard, and divined what it meant. Rising to his feet he bade his son[2] stand likewise, saying to him that it was good they should die together. As the white soldiers burst into the room Cornstalk turned and faced them and so perished.

The outcome of the Revolution placed both the newborn nation and the Indians in a difficult position. Eng-

[1] An act showing how little the Indian character was understood by its perpetrators. In addition to its uselessness as a factor for peace, such a deed was more apt to incite hostilities than to prevent them.

[2] Who had come to visit him.

land, by ceding to the American states all territory she had held south of the Great Lakes and east of the Mississippi had of necessity abandoned her red allies to the mercies of a country which they had just been fighting, and left them on lands the title to which had, in theoretical sense, passed to the confederated colonies. The Republic, on the other hand, could not rid itself of the native red population that had so recently been armed foes. It was brought face to face with a situation that demanded free and unimpeded travel through much of the outlying regions, while at the same time circumstances called for a recognition of the property right of the Indians to lands on which they might live and gain their sustenance. The necessity of more territory toward the west in which the nation might expand and meet the needs of a growing population, together with the attainment of safe travel toward the west were plain, and gradually became — aside from politics — the principal feature of the nation's internal affairs. In fact the conditions here stated, and which were first brought into prominence soon after the Revolution, continued to be the controlling influence in the development of the Republic from that day until the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and all that lay between, were linked together by an unbroken travel system eighty-six years afterward. There were times when the people seemed to pause for a while on the march, as a giant who sleeps, but they always went on again, ever demanding a little more room in which to move and a better way of getting where they wanted to go.

Beginning with the Congress of the Confederation, the newly created United States recognized the several groups of Indians as separate nations having sovereignty over and ownership of territory, and dealt with

them on that basis.[1] Whenever it occurred — as it did many times — that the United States found need for regions owned and occupied by the Indians it acquired possession of such territories by the negotiation of formal treaties, just as it did in buying the Louisiana Territory from France and Florida from Spain.

In the early years of the Northwest Territory the armed troops of the confederated colonies sometimes used force in evicting settlers who had encroached on the Indians' lands in that region, and even burned the log cabins of such invaders. Yet at the same time the nation was demanding that the Indians allow white men to travel into and settle on the territory where the evictions were taking place. These things indicated a willingness — even a desire—on the part of the Caucasian officials to accomplish a predetermined purpose by methods quite correct from the civilized standpoint of orderly legislative and legal process. From the more primitive viewpoint of the natives the curious spectacle presented simply an unworthy quibble. To the Indians it mattered little what method was used in depriving them of their land. They didn't want to give it up at all. It was small consolation for them to discover that henceforth they were to lose

[1] Among the acts of the new American government in which the Indians were acknowledged to be people distinct from the citizens of the Republic, and in which their land proprietorship and qualities of separate nationality were stated may be cited the following:

Articles of confederation; adopted by the Continental Congress in 1777: Article 6.—"No state shall engage in any war without the consent of the United States in Congress assembled, unless such state be actually invaded by enemies, or shall have received certain advice of a resolution being formed by some nation of Indians to invade such state, and the danger is so imminent as not to admit of a delay, till the United States in Congress assembled can be consulted."

Constitution drawn up by the Congress of the Confederation and put into effect in 1789: Article 1. Section 8.—"Congress shall have power . . . to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

Northwest Ordinance, adopted by the Congress of the Confederation in 1787. Section 8.—"The Governor . . . shall proceed, from time to time, as circumstances may require, to lay out the parts of the district on which the Indian titles shall have been extinguished, into counties and townships."

From the same instrument: Article III.—The utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians; their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and in their property rights and liberty they shall never be invaded or disturbed, unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress."

it through reluctantly signed documents, portentous with ceremony and red seals, whose completion was always promptly followed by the appearance of soldiers, surveyors and more white travellers marching through the forest. Some chiefs at last refused to sign any papers, saying that every time they did so their people lost something.

From 1774 until the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, following Wayne's decisive victory over the confederated tribes at Fallen Timbers, there was no real peace along the northwestern border. Caucasian movement either by land or water was at all times unsafe, and many a traveller found a destination he was not seeking. But from 1795 until Tecumseh tried, sixteen years later, to organize the interior tribes into a confederacy opposed to further white advance, reasonable quiet reigned upon the frontier. Whatever other dangers and hardships the traveller might encounter he was in little peril that was due from Indian molestation of any sort.

CHAPTER VI

EARLY CONDITIONS IN THE SOUTH — RADICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ITS DEVELOPMENT AND THAT OF THE NORTH — THE LIMITED MOVEMENT OF EARLY DAYS — ORIGIN AND EFFECT OF THE PLANTATION SYSTEM — SOCIAL CLEAVAGE — WASHINGTON AS A TYPE OF ONE CLASS — THE TASK OF THE PEOPLE AND THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY FOUND STRENGTH TO PERFORM IT

DURING the early years of their history[1] the growth of the southern colonies, with the exception of Virginia, did not proceed nearly so rapidly as that of the regions which have already claimed attention. Nor did important movements of the population develop so promptly. As a whole the general settlement of the future southern states along the Atlantic seaboard took place at a decidedly later date than did the rise of the New England and middle colonies. Other elements that helped to bring about the condition stated were the nature of the southern region itself, and the character, traditions, habits and necessities of the first white men who permanently occupied it. That part of the South extending from the Atlantic to the Mississippi and from the Ohio River to the Gulf of Mexico had not been so favored as the North with a profusion of natural highways of travel in the shape of lakes and rivers. It had, to be sure, the Chesapeake Bay and

[1] The period before 1770.

Potomac River as a gateway into the interior, the Cherokee and Cumberland Rivers flowing northward into the Ohio, and a few coastal streams against whose currents slow progress could be made by small boats or log canoes for goodly distances into the wilderness. In an almost literal sense the South of that early day was a solid block of primeval woods that, apart from the actual coast itself, demanded travel on land or none at all. It was further

24.—A very fine private coach of the late eighteenth century. Probably built about 1790 by David Clark of Philadelphia, for Samuel Powell of that city. Exhibited during the Civil War period, in museums and public fairs, as a coach that had belonged to Washington.

true that rough and mountainous country made up a larger proportion of the territory than was the case in the early settled parts of New England and the middle sections. Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, the two Carolinas and Georgia were notable for the obstacles they presented to early and primitive land travel. Yet it was precisely those difficulties that inspired their early inhabitants with

the indomitable spirit from which victory is born, and made the southern wilderness a scene of memorable deeds. That part of the continent was to witness the first westward march of a white population through the forest; the first organized display of the new travel impulse that afterward continued without interruption by flatboat, steamboat, canal-boat, stage-coach, prairie schooner and railway until there was no more land to cross, and the Pacific Ocean halted the long migration.

Among all phases of the varied history that deals with the occupation and economic conquest of the continent by the white race, that which relates to the South from the time of its first settlements until the War for Independence is perhaps least known. We possess the dates and stories of certain important events, and a few human figures stand out with the prominence of silhouettes against a background of mystery, legend and conjecture. But mere dates are no longer esteemed the chief elements of history. They are not even the skeleton of it, for chronological records alone do not enable us to reconstruct the whole symmetrical substance of a period. They do not portray its features, analyze its qualities of strength and weakness or transform its vanished people and activities into a living drama that can be exhibited like moving pictures thrown upon a screen. The southern generations of that early time lived afar off. They had a hard time of it at first — even harder in many ways than those to the north of them. They tried to be sufficient unto themselves as far as possible; were very busy in the struggle to establish themselves securely in a new country, and — doubtless because of their surroundings, isolation and labors — developed less of the recording instinct than appeared among other white pioneers of the country.

During the early years of the white invasion of Virginia and the shores of Chesapeake Bay practically all travel was carried on between the various little settlements and plantations by means of big log canoes and heavy, broad-beamed sailing boats. And because of their fear of the Indians it was the habit of the people to build shields along the sides of the craft as a protection against arrows, and to fasten small poles in the boats, with hats on top of them just high enough to be seen above the shields, in order to make the natives think the moving parties were stronger than they really were. No effort was made for a long time to extend white activity more than a few miles back from the coast, and from the very first the character of development in the South showed a marked divergence from the tendency that manifested itself in the northern colonies. In the North the people at once began to gather into compact little communities which speedily became towns and served as central points from which radiated the white influence. In the South this was not so. The main impulse that directed the method and progress of southern settlement in its earliest days lay in the control of men who, before coming to the new continent, had been accustomed to traditions and methods of life handed down from the feudal period of large landed estates which produced all that was needful for owner and retainer alike. Hence the establishment of the plantation system of the South, and the creation of conditions that profoundly affected its future history not only with regard to travel movement, but in respect of all those other social and economic conditions that are always based on the accessibility of population units to one another. It must not be understood there were no towns whatever in the South during its first century and a half, for there were such

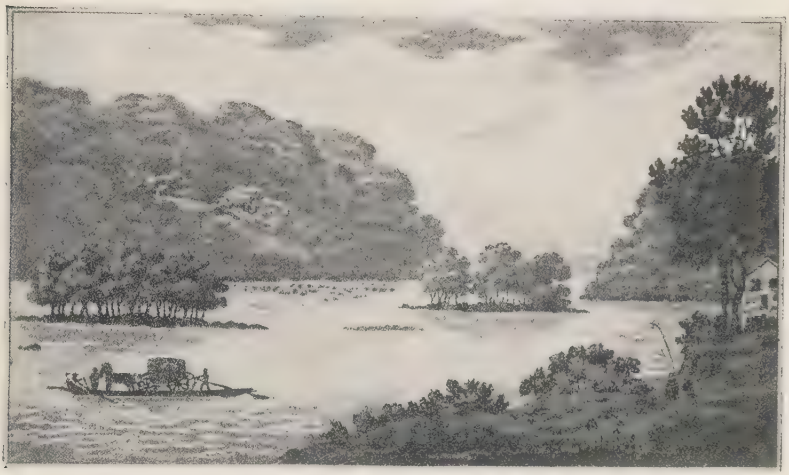
communities, but they were very few in number, very small, and exerted practically no influence in the life of the inhabitants.

By the year 1689 Virginia had some 50,000 or 60,000 people scattered in obedience to the plantation system, but keeping close to water. The few points where population was at all concentrated were little settlements called Henrico, Bermuda and West Shirley. Rude paths through the forest were increasing, and a few rough roads were in existence, but no travel by vehicle was yet possible. All land journeys of consequence were made on horseback, and three years before the date named the Burgesses had recognized the importance of quicker travel by passing a law for improving the breed of horses in the colony. The landed proprietors met this appeal of the government with enthusiasm and the result was the evolution of a splendid type of animal that, together with an equally famous breed developed about the same time in Rhode Island,[1] served through all the English colonies, for a long time, as the best means of getting from place to place.

The early conditions in Maryland were similar to those in Virginia. Plantations were established all along the bays and rivers, each with a water frontage, and boats were the standard vehicle for such little travel as took place. Until the time of the Revolution the colony — aside from plantation clearings on the waterways — was one unbroken forest. The old Baltimore was a trivial settlement that appeared on Bush River about 1683, but the new and present city was established on the Patapsco in 1730. Even as late as the year 1752 the town had but twenty-five houses. Twenty years after the founding of

[1] The Rhode Island horses were called the Narragansett breed. It is believed to have died out soon after 1800. Horses were expensive, and good animals for horseback riding were worth from £25 to £40.

the colony there were only about eight thousand people within its limits, and by 1689 the population had only grown to some thirty thousand. After that time the increase was more noticeable and by 1751 Maryland had 145,000 people. Road building was advancing in a few



25.—Method by which coach or carriage travellers were conveyed across a stream in the days when journeys in wheeled vehicles were first becoming possible. If the ferry boat was a small one, the horses were compelled to swim.

localities and the first wheeled vehicles and sedan chairs had appeared.

The early population of these two colonies differed from that which established itself in the North in as striking a degree as did the economic conditions of the two regions. From the first there existed in the South a sharper social cleavage in the population than was to be found in New England and the intermediate settlements. It practically divided the people of the South into two classes, one of which had brought to America and transplanted here all those qualities and customs that had

long distinguished the man of culture and landed proprietor of England. The other class, numerically the greater but of infinitely less consequence in directing the political and social affairs of the people during the first century, was made up of small independent husbandmen from abroad or from the northern settlements, and of agricultural employees and retainers of the rich. The language of Lord Calvert in cataloguing his first party of settlers as "twenty gentlemen and three hundred laborers" gives a fairly good idea of the distinction that long existed between the two sorts of inhabitants. The body of the population performed the labor necessary in transforming a vast primeval forest into a civilization. Its members felled and burned the huge trees, made potash from their ashes, planted the soil, built the log cabins and propelled the boats when journeys were made. Their lives were dedicated to severe and unceasing toil, to eating, sleeping and fighting. There is little need for wonder that they left practically no annals of the years they lived in. They spent their days in doing things; not in telling about them. And in the performance of the tremendous task that had fallen to their lot they were sustained by a strength not appreciated by themselves. They and their ancestors had never been on speaking terms with luxury and they were not able, through personal knowledge and understanding, to compare their situation with a less stern necessity. It was well for America that this was so.

The other class organized and directed the activities of the time, valiantly led their fellow men in battle when need arose and sought, in the utmost degree permitted by their surroundings, to perpetuate on the edge of an immense wilderness all those refinements and light diversions of society without which their situation must have

been intolerable. They, much more than the bulk of their fellows, had need of other interests which could distract them for a time from the problem they had attacked. Even they did not behold their task as we do, for they were in actual contact with it, and so could not mentally grasp its full proportions. Only a distant view and a perspective like the one of to-day could do that. Such travel as they were able to enjoy was to England or to the northern colonies aboard little vessels bearing cargoes of their tobacco.

So the South slowly grew, and each plantation or settlement created its own little lost and forest-circled world, the uttermost limits of which included only the other humans within a radius of forty or fifty miles — a day's hard horseback journey. Usually the geographical distance within which neighborly intercourse was constantly maintained was decidedly less than that. The rare occasion which brought about a more general gathering of the population was a prearranged hunt for wild pigs[1] or a meeting at some common center for a carnival of horse racing or other sport. To events like these the landed proprietors and numbers of the less important figures of the population would often journey through the woods for a hundred miles or more. It was out of such early assemblages that later grew the fairs held at Norfolk and other towns, to which the populace travelled in still larger numbers. These meetings, and the experiences gained by them, had much to do with the establishment of permanent land routes of travel that gradually came into existence.

The type of landed gentlemen who from the first so indelibly impressed their character and traditions on

[1] Doubtless the ancestors of the "razor-backs" still found in some woods of the South.

the life of the South can be well portrayed by reference to a certain prominent and highly esteemed young soldier and pioneer named Colonel George Washington. He came somewhat late upon the scene, but in him were embodied not only the attributes that had ruled the region for generations, but other traits that presaged the American of the future. More than any other man of his era or of all the colonies up to that time, he seems to have penetrated the future with a prophet's half-veiled vision and beheld a little of the needs and restlessness of an unborn nation, and the approaching demand for means of swift and comfortable movement throughout the land. Yet in that respect he was not a miracle of omniscience, any more than he was the perfect, self-sacrificing, wholly immaculate, austere and almost godlike man into which later generations, moral precepts and millions of school-books have hopelessly transformed him.

He was a serious minded human being of extraordinary ability, self-control and justifiable self-confidence into whose character was woven the executive instinct, somewhat of selfish thrift, and an unusual power for commanding the best endeavor of other men. He had a keen appreciation of the value — in public affairs — of a large dignity and sobriety, and in private life showed a strongly developed fondness for the good things of this world. The respect in which Washington was great above his contemporaries did not lie in his abilities, for numerous men of his time were as able as he, but in a certain rare quality of the will by virtue of which he could effectively isolate and apply those abilities, each in its appropriate circumstance and time. Many men are equipped by nature as he was, and, despite opportunity, remain mediocre

in deeds accomplished, for they lack that one further thing without which the rest are valueless possessions — a self created and dogged determination to apply their powers

26.—Picturesque bridges, supported by huge logs or hewed timbers, began to appear as soon as wagons came into general use.

with utmost skill and effort to the tasks which confront them. That is a gift which nature does not bestow.

Like any other gentleman of the period he drank his half pint or pint of wine at dinner, together with additional punch and beer. He would ride ten miles to attend a dance and skip about for three hours without sitting down after he got there. He spent whole days over the card table and bought his cards by the dozen packs at a time. He raced his horses, bet his money on their chances to win, and delighted when they came home in front of all the rest. In a period of two months he had visitors from other plantations on twenty-nine days, and himself

went away on seven other occasions.[1] He gathered about him, in the shadow of the wilderness, a library of the best books in history, literature and the arts,[2] and read them. Other men of his class did the like in all respects. It was their necessary way of life; an antidote for a sedentary and immobile existence and their endless battle with the rude conditions of a new country. But the other sort of people had no such diversions. The forest fell before the "greatest wielders of the ax the world has known;" the smell of burning wood hung always in the air; a haze of smoke drifted over the clearing.

Gradually, as the regions still farther to the southward were invaded by the white race there came increasing rumors back to the northward of their fertility and mildness of climate. Rumors at length changed to more or less authentic information, and then began a slow but constantly increasing stream of travel toward them from New England and the middle colonies. Some of the more important movements of the sort have already been mentioned. The Carolinas had been occupied by various driblets of immigration from other colonies during the period from 1653 to 1740,[3] and several parties from abroad had also arrived. The Ashley River region was peopled by the English in 1670, and two years later saw the site of Charleston occupied. Quite a number of Huguenot refugees also came to the country after the revocation of the edict of Nantes in 1685, and settled along Cooper River. By the year 1689 the territory now known as North Carolina and South Carolina held some five or six thousand inhabitants, and in 1693 the region was

[1] He tells of these various things in his "Journal."
[2] The large part of his books is now in the Athaneum in Boston.
[3] See list of early organized migrations in Chapter III. Some of those who journeyed into the Carolinas from Virginia did so in order to escape the harsh measures of government that followed an insurrection in the last named colony.

divided into two colonies. The population of the northernmost of the two at that time had been mainly secured through migrations from other American settlements,[1] and the principal points at which the newcomers had gathered were around the Albemarle section. It was to Albemarle that the New Englanders came and to which the Virginians fled after the uprising there. The southern colony, on the contrary, was more strongly influenced and peopled by settlers direct from England, Scotland and Ireland,[2] and their first important centers of activity were the Ashley River and Charleston. Gradually the coast settlements spread and threw off fragments that made their way into the interior.

Georgia did not appear on the map of American territory permanently occupied by the English speaking race until 1733. In the previous November Oglethorpe[3] had reached Charleston from England with thirty-five families[4] chosen to be the nucleus of a new invasion, and leaving them in the South Carolina town he set out to visit the unknown country that was his destination. Travelling by canoe he finally reached the spot destined to become Savannah, bought land from the Indians there, and his little company took up in its turn the conquest of the wilderness. The progress of Oglethorpe's colony was slow, despite the arrival of several parties of Italians, Salzburgers and Scotch during the next few years. In 1736 Oglethorpe brought over two hundred and two more colonists, among whom was John Wesley. Augusta, which was founded in 1734, had but forty-seven in-

[1] Though about the beginning of the eighteenth century a few Swiss and Germans settled at Newbern.

[2] Other elements that entered into the early population of South Carolina were parties of German Palatines that came over after 1720, and some Swiss that settled near the Savannah River about 1732.

[3] He had received a grant from the Crown.

[4] A hundred and thirty souls, all told.

habitants in 1741, exclusive of a small garrison of soldiers, and in 1752, when the colony's charter was surrendered to the crown of England it contained only about two thousand three hundred white people and a thousand slaves. They had made scarcely any impression on the forests that surrounded them, and moved about hardly at all.

But little more need be said concerning general conditions in the South as they were just before the commencement of the population movements that introduced a new era into the history of America. Florida was merely the shuttlecock of foreign wars, alternately held by Spain and England, and her affairs bore no relation to the greater events of permanent human progress. Alabama was an unknown country with a slight fringe of settlements along the coast. Mobile, the chief of them, was a little town hedged in by a stockade and held by the English from 1763. New Orleans, like Florida, was the shifting prize of European warfare. France owned the Louisiana province until 1762, when she ceded it to Spain, and England was scheming to possess it. New Orleans had already become a place of considerable importance and contained some eight hundred houses and about four thousand inhabitants. It was surrounded by the inevitable stockade, two and a half miles in diameter. Nearly six thousand other people lived in the neighborhood of the city, whose activities extended up the Mississippi to a little French settlement called St. Louis, far off in the interior of the continent. Boats sometimes went up the river to St. Louis, taking two or three months for the trip, but, as has already been said, the navigation of the Mississippi at that time, or during its control by European nations, was not a factor in the development of the American travel system.

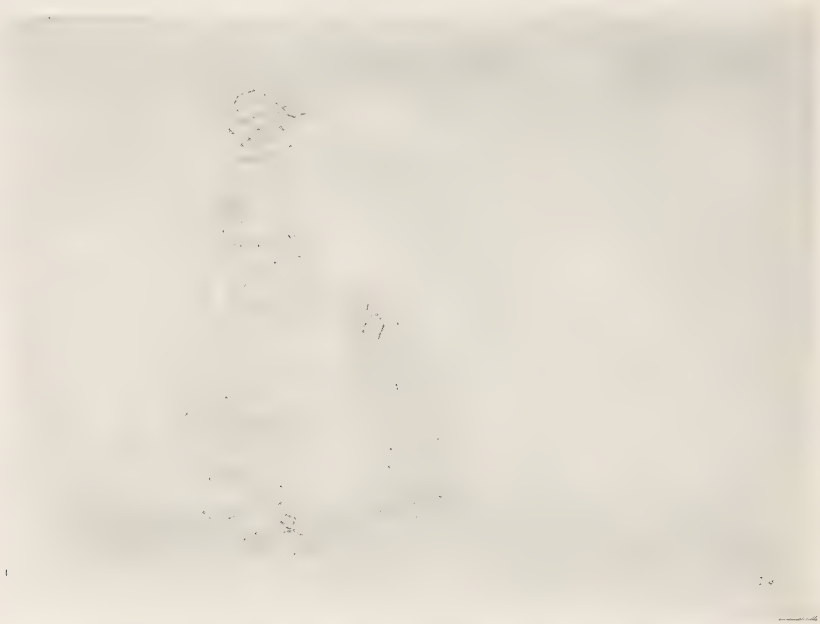
CHAPTER VII

THE FIRST AMERICANS WHO MARCHED TO THE WEST — THEIR ANCESTRY, QUALITIES, APPEARANCE AND MANNER OF LIVING — LOG CABINS, THEIR CONSTRUCTION, FURNISHINGS AND INDUSTRIES — NATURE OF THE EDUCATION OF THE HILL PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH — THEIR PECULIAR FITNESS FOR THEIR APPROACHING TASK — THE REPUBLIC OF WAUTAGA

WE may now return to the region included at present in western and southwestern Virginia, western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, and consider the people who were the first Americans to take up their march toward the West, together with the conditions that produced them and out of which their performance grew. Those men and women were Americans by birth and habit, and although the date of the exploits soon to be told was as early as the period between 1769 and 1779, the population that performed them could even then look back through several generations of ancestry which, like themselves, had grown up within the shadow of the woods and fought for life and substance with the same primitive conditions. They were the descendants of the bands of restless spirits that came down by overland marches from the more northern localities of Pennsylvania and New England during the north-and-south migrations of the period from 1735 onward, and who had brought with them into the South not only the traditional knowledge of

border existence but a lifetime of personal experience as well.

So — as a race — they had no new things to learn. The instinct of the pioneer was in them, and a cool caution, surprising alertness, bravery and entire self-reliance



27.—A backwoodsman and his dog. The cabin dwellers' clothing was all of home fabrication, and made of linsey-woolsey or deer skin. Original sketch by Joshua Shaw. This and the following fifteen illustrations, to No. 42 inclusive, constitute a series showing conditions of pioneer life and travel in the wilderness.

marked all their acts. They had no schools, but a boy's education nevertheless began as soon as he could walk. His lessons were not mere words for the brain to memorize and the tongue to repeat; they were the methods in which things were done and results accomplished by people older than himself, and it was his duty to observe those

processes, comprehend their purpose and duplicate them with equal skill. He learned the lessons well, for he knew that many times his life would depend on his proficiency. At the age of twelve or fourteen his father handed him a rifle and he ceased to be a boy.[1] With that act he became a man, having his man's share of responsibilities in the community and his particular loophole to defend.

The education of the girl was a similar process. By the time her brother had received his rifle she had mastered all the duties of a housewife. When a boy went on an errand he did not go spinning over the country on a bicycle or clattering along the pavements on roller skates. He took down his rifle from its pegs on the wall, looked at the priming and started across the clearing with every sense alert, and with a mind so trained that the appearance and condition of all the objects about him, together with the action of beast or bird and each other detail on the face of earth, spoke its true meaning. Though he had received no schooling in the fashion of later days he had long been enrolled in nature's university — the forest. All its varied aspects and voices had been his teachers at an age when the boys of nowadays are still flying kites and playing marbles. He had received his degree in the difficult art of self-preservation, and was about to enter on a post-graduate course in rearing a family and increasing his stock of worldly goods. Many of those little men and women were married at the age of fifteen or sixteen, and the rigid training they had received in self-reliance and the serious concerns of life made them competent to assume such relationship and—measured by the standards of the time — to win success.

[1] Long before reaching the age indicated he had become an expert with the weapon. The presentation of a rifle at that period of life had somewhat the quality of a ceremonial, and was intended to impress upon him his standing among the elders.

In personal appearance the people reflected the conditions under which they lived. Their faces, brown from exposure to the elements, were singularly set in expression and carried a sort of grimness. Nothing surprised them. The happening of every event was discounted in advance. Its coming was calmly awaited, and whatever action it demanded from them was performed so quickly that it seemed rather to be by instinct than as the result of thought or reason. Their eyes were the distinguishing feature of their countenances. Clear, inscrutable and direct, the vision of man or woman saw everything. When talking with one another they spoke eye to eye. While about their work, in the open or the forest, a single glance had the gathering power of a fisherman's net and the analysis of a microscope. But the chief quality and value of such a look was its instant perception of the abnormal. Trained from babyhood to recognize the normal appearance of all things about him, the eye of the woodsman automatically ignored what was undisturbed and pounced on whatever was as it should not be. A footprint of any sort shrieked like a ten-inch shell, and a single leaf standing on edge when it should have been lying flat made him halt and ask the question, "Why?"

Those early Americans carried no superfluous flesh. Somewhat above the average height, as men and women go, they were lean and supple. Their ancestors had been dwellers in the hills before them, and, of choice, had come into a mountainous country to make their new homes. Much walking and incessant labor had given them great endurance. The strength of their rough hands could break bones. Those who were weak died early, and many of the rest lived until they were killed in one way or another. They walked with a soft and swinging stride, keep-

28.—Backwoodsmen at work in the forest. "Greatest wielders of the ax the world has known." Showing details of dress and the type of instrument by which the wilderness was swept away.
Original sketch by Joshua Shaw.

ing themselves always well poised, for no man ever knew whether his next move would be a leap to the right or to the left, a dive behind a log, a dash ahead or a rush backward over the path he had come. Then again he might decide to climb a tree. He could never tell beforehand. Circumstances decided those things. They were a nervous people in a certain sense, yet they held themselves with such a grip that they seemed almost phlegmatic. Nerves — or at least any indulgence in the state of mental excitability which has become a modern disease—were not in harmony with the surroundings. When a man or woman aimed a rifle the body that upheld it was like a carved figure. And after the smoke floated away there was no exultation to be seen; only the same outward calmness. Every task, whatever its degree of importance, and no matter how swiftly it was to be performed, was undertaken with careful and methodical process. Each individual sought to save his strength by planning his acts beforehand, that no energy might be wasted by indecision or misdirected effort when the need for action came upon him.

Such were the qualities of the people and the methods by which they adapted themselves to the country their fathers had invaded. Perhaps no race has ever been more successful than they were in fitting themselves to the natural conditions around them and for the work they were destined to accomplish.

A glance at any map will reveal the character of the region in which they lived. It was a rough country whose chief natural feature was a confusion of hills and mountains that as a general rule extended in parallel ridges from northeast to southwest. Between the ranges were valleys through which ran many rapid and usually shal-

low rivers and lesser streams. In the valleys, but near to the hills, were set up the homes of this strong primitive population. When the original migrations took place the forest swept over the whole land, mountain and valley alike, in its untouched and forbidding aspect. During the years that had gone by since then a multitude of little clearings had been made by the mountaineers, whose numbers had rather rapidly increased. The number of people who lived in the hills of western North Carolina and western Virginia at the time their organized exodus began can not be accurately given, but perhaps it amounted to fifteen or twenty thousand souls.

All their efforts had made but small impression on the forest. The number of trees to be felled in such work was so incalculable and their individual size so great that they cumbered the ground. There was no way to move them and nowhere to have taken them if the moving had been possible. Nor was there any use to which they could be put. They had to be burned where they fell. The timber used for fuel, and in building cabins, making fences and fashioning household furniture was such an infinitesimal part of the whole mass as to be unworthy of mention.

So far as travel facilities and opportunities for getting about the country were concerned, the hill people of the South, from 1735 to the time of the Revolution, faced just the same situation that confronted the Pilgrims and Puritans in 1635. They were beginning all over again, in their part of the continent, a process of evolution that had elsewhere been in active operation for a century or more. They had a few Indian trails and some horses, but mainly depended on their own legs. The streams that were narrow were spanned by log bridges, and at various well-known points on the wider rivers, big flat-bottomed ferry

boats were built, and kept for the common use of the inhabitants. Canoes were also used, but not nearly to the extent that prevailed in the early days of New England. Most of them were made from logs, and were called dug-outs. The one big advantage possessed by the mountaineers over the earlier inhabitants of the North was to be found in their habits and qualities rather than in any phase of their natural surroundings. In truth the country they lived in offered much less inducement to easy movement than that of the former Americans with whom they are here compared. But the southerners were an even bolder and more self-reliant people, as might have been expected of a race with three generations of wilderness experience as an inheritance. They were more easily adaptable to conditions.

No settlements that resembled towns were to be found in the hills. The cabins of the settlers — each with its clearing — showed a tendency to spring up beside some attractive stream along which they might be scattered, over a distance of a dozen miles, to the number of fifty or more. Each of these loosely connected communities, as soon as it was large enough, used its common effort in building at a convenient point a blockhouse and stockade for mutual defense. Later the people often put up a log church in whose pulpit of rough oaken slabs certain ones of the valley presided in turn, while the rest of the people sat on benches beneath them. On rare occasions a genuine ordained preacher of the gospel — a circuit rider on a salary of fifty or seventy-five dollars a year — sent word that he would visit one of the chapels. When such an event was to happen the tidings of it went through many valleys, and on the appointed Sabbath day there assembled a company drawn from all the country round. Every

tree near the log structure was a hitching-post where weary horses stood, while the men and women who had ridden them crowded within to listen to a real sermon redolent of brimstone and filled with the deep, sincere and devout feeling that reflected the inward lives of the congregation. The hill men, for all their roughness, were an earnest and religious people who clung fast to an abiding belief that their affairs were swayed by a guidance higher than their own.

Though the region was far removed from effective legal control, crime was practically non-existent. Such a tie of common need and dependence as bound the population together, added to the labor of their existence, operated strongly to suppress any tendency toward internal disorder. It must be said, nevertheless, that the white men assumed an attitude toward the Indians that was not always in harmony with the recognition they gave to the rights of one another. In this respect they were far from being exceptional. Such regulation of their mutual affairs as seemed necessary was largely a matter of common consent, and in every district there were a few figures who, as always under like conditions, were looked upon as leaders of the rest.

The homes of the people were a faithful mirror of their character and surroundings. To those little cabins of the early centuries of American development a fascinating interest has always clung, and strong as that attraction has been it is destined to be greater still in the future, as more attention is paid by each succeeding generation to the formative period of national life. More and more it is coming to be realized that America has a history which underlies the catalogue of her wars and political wrangles; a history that, because of the conditions amid

which it developed and the problems it solved, contains an interest to rival the story of any other nation. Nothing is better fitted to be a symbol of that narrative than the log cabin, for if but one such habitation and its contents had survived we could, with no other knowledge whatsoever of the period it represented, reconstruct from it and its furnishings the qualities, habits and methods of those early people with a striking approximation to the truth.

Log cabins were always, when possible, built by community effort. On an appointed day the neighbors of the man who needed a house appeared on the spot selected, inquired the intended dimensions of the cabin, and began chopping down seventy or eighty of the tallest and straightest small trees in the immediate neighborhood.[1] A common size for the house was about twenty feet long by sixteen feet wide, often with a low room, or upper floor, under the sloping roof. When the felled trees had been chopped into proper lengths the logs thus made were rolled to the site picked out. These preliminary processes required two or three days.

Two logs each sixteen feet long[2] and of greater thickness than the others were then put in position twenty feet apart, and at each end of each log a deep notch was cut on the upper surface extending through about one-third of its diameter. Two other logs, each twenty feet long and correspondingly thick were next fitted with notches at the ends, both above and below, and were laid on the first pair, into which their lower notches dovetailed. A foundation was thus obtained that lifted the body of the cabin some three feet above the ground. About a dozen slender logs

[1] The most common trees of the southern forest were the oak, cottonwood, mulberry, hickory, sycamore, persimmon, ash, locust, tulip, walnut, fir, birch, pine, chestnut, maple, beech and hemlock.

[2] If the cabin was to be of the dimensions named, as is supposed in this description.

29.—After the ax had passed. The stumps were left to rot. Only a trifling fraction of the timber was needed for fences, fuel, cabins and home-made furniture. The fallen trees covered the ground and had to be burned where they fell.

sixteen feet long and usually ten inches in diameter were laid at regular intervals, so that they extended from one of the twenty-foot logs to the other. These were to serve as a support for the thin slabs of wood[1] that were later to be laid on them as a floor. The process with large logs already described was then recommenced, each tier notched and fitting into the transverse timbers above and below until the walls had been built to a height about seven feet above the floor. Another row of slender logs was added at this point as the top of the lower room and the floor of the one above. Three or four courses of heavy trees, as before, completed the body of the structure.

At either end of the upper framework a stout little tree, about six feet tall and so cut as to present two short diverging limbs at the top, was set up, and from one such crotch to another the ridge pole was placed in position. The roof itself was formed by wide slabs of wood hewed bodily out of large trees[2] and placed on the topmost tier of side-logs with their upper ends converging and resting on the ridge pole. To keep the roof slabs in position a long log was laid over their lower ends at each side of the cabin. Its extremities rested on the upper tier of end-logs, which had been kept unusually long for this purpose,[3] and it was in turn held secure by means of heavy wooden pins. Other timbers were placed over the roof slabs in similar manner, and the body of the cabin was complete.

The doors and windows were sawed out after all logs were in place, and their edges were cased with slabs to keep the walls from sagging. There was no glass, and all openings were protected by strong doors. The window panes were made of paper — when it could be obtained —

[1] Called puncheons by the pioneers.
[2] This process was one of extreme labor.
[3] See picture reproduced.

plentifully coated with hogs' lard or bear grease. The big fireplace was constructed of large flat stones, and the chimney was built of sticks laid in the same alternating manner as were the timbers of the house, with the chinks of the chimney structure filled and covered with clay that was soon hardened by the heat. All spaces between the logs were then stopped up with mud and moss and generally plastered over with clay in addition. Slabs were laid for the floors, a perpendicular ladder of five or six rounds served as a staircase, and the domicile was finished. The whole job ordinarily took about a week, but was often done in less time if six or eight men were busy in the work. Not a scrap of metal had entered into its construction. It was wholly a product made from materials found within a quarter of a mile of the spot where it stood ready for occupancy.

The furnishings of the cabin were as simple as the structure itself. Sometimes the chairs were short sections sawed from the trunk of a hickory tree,[1] but often they were more ornate and pretentious affairs, consisting of a slab of green wood stuck on top of three legs. One type of table was a similar contrivance, but with four legs, and movable. The other sort was built permanently against the wall at one side, with its other edge on sticks. The bed frame was usually held up at one side by supports driven into the wall. On it were laid the inevitable slabs, and then a bedtick filled with chaff, pine needles or dried moss. Up-stairs, if there was an up-stairs, were more beds, and smoked meat and dried herbs that hung from the roof. Pillow covers and sheets were almost unknown. Of blankets, though, there was usually an abundance. Beside the larded window through which the sunshine came with

[1] Such a chair was called a "block."

golden mellowness stood a home-made spinning-wheel, and on puncheon shelves around the walls were a few dishes, pots and kettles. Near the fireplace and doorway hung rifles and yellow powder horns, and somewhere, perhaps, there was a comb and bit of looking-glass. But there was a limit to extravagance. Forks and spoons were either whittled out of wood or made by a blacksmith, and the knives served for a large variety of other purposes that need not be discussed. One other feature of the cabin that deserves mention was a habit often displayed by the floor and furniture. Owing to the haste with which everything was built the flat slabs of wood that entered so largely into the construction of the home were usually put in place while still in a green state, and the heat from the big fireplace caused them to warp amazingly. A bed so made would soon undulate beneath its occupants like the waves of the sea; the dinner would all slide to the center of the table and the floor would curl up like a porcupine.

Each little settlement constituted an independent and self-supporting establishment[1] and the cabin itself was a veritable industrial institution. The man, or some neighbor more skilled than he in metal working, made his rifle, ax, hoe and sickle. Ploughs were usually brought into the wilderness from a coast town, though occasionally they were forged on the spot. The head of the family made all the house furnishings, his wife's loom and spinning-wheel, shaped dishes out of wood, and contrived a hand-mill for grinding corn. The hominy block was a piece of hickory tree trunk with a bowl-shaped depression burned into it at one end. The boys helped their father in all such things,

[1] A wilderness settlement produced all its own necessities of life excepting powder, lead, salt and iron. Salt was made at several places in the colonies where salt springs had been found, and from thence laboriously carried over the country, by boat as far as possible. Wild honey served for sugar.

30.—The home and clearing of a backwoodsman. It was a gash cut in the universal forest, with a cabin and farm buildings made of logs.

and dried the strips of venison over the fire[1] after the day's work in the open was done. As each new baby arrived its elder brothers made a cradle of bark for the little stranger. When the man wanted a new suit of clothes he tanned and worked deer and raccoon skins into pliability and turned them over to his wife, who cut them and sewed them together. Such a suit was considered to fit well if it did not hamper its owner's movements in any way.[2] His cap was of skin with the fur on, and his shoes were soft moccasins, as were the foot coverings of all the family.

Cloth was called linsey-woolsey, and was a mixture of flax and wool made by the wife by carding and spinning. From it she created her jacket, petticoat and poke bonnet. Once in a while she made coats and trousers for her husband or the boys out of the same home-made fabric. The girls helped their mother in her household manufacturing, knit their own heavy stockings and made similar socks for the men. They also cut and sewed the bedticks and filled them, collected pine knots to serve as lamps in the summer evenings, made the soap, learned how to distinguish such herbs as were used as remedies in time of sickness, and hung them up to dry.

Actual money was a thing of fable, having no place in such a community. If a man by some strange chance came into possession of those curious pieces of copper or silver he hastened to swap them for something of practical use, and kept to himself his opinion of the man who took them. All necessities of life had their accepted ratios of value to one another, and needed things were got by barter.

[1] It was then called "jerked meat," and was hung up under the roof for future use.

[2] A deerskin suit was often decorated with fringes at the bottom of the coat and down the sides of the trousers. They were of similar skin cut into narrow ribbons and were sometimes dyed red or blue. City-made boots, any kind of a hat and coats with buttons on them were esteemed sure evidence of snobbishness and were severely frowned upon.

Skins of all useful sorts came nearer to actual currency than anything else.

Powder, salt, iron, and lead for bullets were brought in from distant towns on the coast or to the northward, and were carried overland in as large quantities as the nature of the country would permit. Powder, in the cities, was worth about two dollars and a half a pound and lead about sixteen cents. When the hill people needed fresh stocks of such things they sent out bales of skins by some of their number,[1] and in that way got the few commodities they could not produce themselves.

There was an intimate relationship between all these conditions and the travel impulse that so suddenly sprang into existence from amid them. For the social organization here described was the only one that could successfully have conducted such a movement. It was as though some far-seeing power had long since planned a westward advance of the population, and, without disclosing its predetermined purpose, had trained the people for the part they were to play in history. No army of soldiers could have made the journey on which the cabin dwellers of the southern mountains were soon to set forth. It was a task far beyond the ability of military discipline merely, and the larger the force of trained automatons which had attempted it, the speedier and more complete would have been the disaster that must have followed. The westward advance through the wilderness was one of those few instances of record in which the attendant conquest was made, not primarily by the force of weapons, but by the adaptability of the invaders to their new surroundings and a resourcefulness as self-sustaining domestic arti-

[1] The pack-train method of travel by means of which this intercourse was carried on will be described in a later chapter.

sans rather than as warriors. Such conquests are always vital to the region affected. A military army scars the land that feels its presence, but after a time it either retreats, or, ceasing to be an army, is absorbed by the country it has reached, and its visit becomes a paragraph in text-books. But when in earlier times white men of Anglo-Saxon stock resolved on an expedition from which there could be no retreat, and to whose success there must be no alternative, they did not begin it with guns and food alone. Instead, they burdened themselves down with their women and children, dogs, pots, pans and cattle, and started into the unknown. The eras of such spectacles are past, and considering them from these later days it can be understood how needless were the fears with which more timid souls sometimes looked on such hegiras. The multitudinous details of human, inanimate, and four-legged baggage that paralyzed speed and seemed to presage failure were the elements that made success inevitable. Without them the men could have returned.

The first symptom of the permanent invasion of the region beyond the mountains was seen in 1771 and 1772, when a little stream of people drifted down toward the southwest from Pennsylvania and northern Virginia into the broad valley that is bounded on the west by the Cumberland Mountains and on the east by the Unaka or Great Smoky range.

Through it ran the various branches of the Clinch and Holston Rivers, that empty into the Tennessee.[1] The men travelled under the trees on foot, while the women and household goods were loaded on the horses, and the elder children drove the cows and pigs. It was a journey that,

[1] Heretofore referred to in these pages as the Cherokee River.

save in its greater length, was in many respects a repetition of the march of Pastor Hooker and his congregation through the wilds of Massachusetts a hundred and thirty-five years before. The political boundaries of the colonies were rather vague in those times, and the people of these little bands, knowing that the upper part of the valley was a part of Virginia, thought the region where they stopped to build their cabins and make clearings in the

31.—Usual type of a cabin dweller's home. The method of building such a house is described in this chapter. Habitations like this were the abodes of nearly all Americans, except town-people, for a century and a half.

forest was also in that colony. It was not, but was theoretically under the jurisdiction of North Carolina, and was later to become the extreme eastern part of the present state of Tennessee. They were so far removed from any other civilization, and so much out of the reach of any government that they soon proceeded with all deliberation

to set up in their valley a little republic of their own. It was called Wautaga,[1] from a small stream that empties into the Holston River, and it had a formal written constitution,[2] which was the first instrument of the sort drawn up by Americans west of the mountains. The affairs of the state were administered by a legislature of thirteen men. Five of these were appointed to carry on the executive and judicial business of the republic. Courts were organized with stated sittings, and an instance of their authority and methods lies in the case of a horse thief who was arrested on a Monday, tried on Wednesday and hanged on Friday.

Wautaga negotiated formal treaties with surrounding nations of Indians, and for six years its machinery of government successfully administered all its affairs, while the people themselves built their cabins and blockhouses, felled the forest, raised crops and fought against the Indians whenever war with the natives occurred.[3]

On one occasion hostilities between the red men and Wautaga broke out with such suddenness that the settlers had to run pell-mell to a fort without thought of saving any of their possessions. When finally behind shelter with whole skins they began to consider what they had left in the cabins, and somebody cried out that they had forgotten the Bibles in the church. Forthwith a sally-party was organized and left the stockade to secure the volumes, while the rest of the population awaited in suspense the result of the attempt. Shots were heard at intervals, and at last

[1] Also spelled Watauga and Wataga.

[2] The phraseology of the document unfortunately has not survived.

[3] The principal Indians of the South were the five Appalachian confederacies called the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks and Seminoles. They lived principally in permanent settlements, and were not nomadic in the sense that many other tribes were. Their number is believed to have reached about 70,000. The tribe with which the early white invaders of the South had the most trouble was the Cherokees, who lived in the mountains of Tennessee, the Carolinas, Alabama and Georgia. In all its essential features and underlying causes the border warfare in the South between the two races resembled the troubles in the North that have been described.

the men were seen to be on their way back with every appearance of triumph. A jubilation attended their return and the demonstration of joy was soon discovered to be justified. For the party had not only rescued the Bibles, but had stopped on the way back and scalped eleven Indians. This was in 1776. Two years afterward North Carolina took charge of things and the sovereignty of the little backwoods republic disappeared for all time.

Shortly before the incident of Wautaga there had entered into this history one of its two commanding human figures. His name was Daniel Boone, and in his personality and exploits were centered the beginning of the events with which we have now to deal.

CHAPTER VIII

POPULAR IGNORANCE OF THE COUNTRY BEYOND THE ALLEGHANIES — DANIEL BOONE COMES ON THE SCENE — HOW HE GOT HIS LOVE OF FORESTS AND SOLITUDE — EIGHT GO AWAY AND TWO COME BACK — THE RESOLVE OF THE CABIN DWELLERS — BEGINNING OF THE WESTWARD COURSE OF EMPIRE — A CARAVAN ON THE MARCH — A TEMPORARY CHECK — THE SCHEME OF THE TRANSYLVANIA COMPANY

THERE were three principal reasons that impelled thirty thousand people of the South to turn their backs on established homes within the space of a few years and "wander through the wilderness of America in quest of the country of Kentucke."[1]

One cause was the comparative congestion of the population immediately to the eastward of the unseen land; a second was strong popular protest against illegal taxes and the display of luxury based on oppression;[2] the third was an interest suddenly born of tales that described the character of the West. A few other minor elements contributed toward the impulse, but these three factors in the life of the cabin dwellers, all coming simultaneously into operation, started the travel through the forests.

It is hard to realize that an almost complete ignorance of the region west of the Alleghany Mountains continued among the English speaking population until such a little

[1] Boone's quaint description of the movement.
[2] For an extended understanding of the domestic troubles of the North Carolina people see "Historical Sketches of North Carolina," by John H. Wheeler.

32.—External appearance of an early blockhouse such as was built on the border as a place of refuge for the cabin dwellers during Indian troubles. It was usually erected on an elevation and the trees were cleared from the immediate vicinity.

while ago as 1767.[1] For nearly a hundred and fifty years the colonists had bustled up and down the coast of the continent; the wilderness had given way to cities, towns and farms; Indian trails had grown into busy roads that served as arteries for a rapidly growing travel and commerce. On the west of the narrow little strip so occupied stood a few parallel ranges of low mountains and beyond them — mystery. Speaking of that strange condition a few years after it had ceased to exist, the state of affairs which prevailed in 1767 was described by Chief Justice John Marshall in the following words:

"The country beyond the Cumberland Mountain, still appeared to the dusky view of the generality of the people of Virginia, almost as obscure and doubtful, as America itself to the people of Europe, before the voyage of Columbus. A country there was — of this none could doubt, who thought at all; but whether land or water, mountain or plain, fertility or barrenness, preponderated — whether inhabited by men or beasts, or both, or neither, they knew not. If inhabited by men, they were supposed to be Indians — for such had always infested the frontiers. And this had been a powerful reason for not exploring the region west of the great Mountain, which concealed Kentucky from their sight."

If the cabin people of the South seem to have been unwittingly trained for the task they were now to accomplish, so was Daniel Boone in like manner fitted by inheritance and personal experience for his own individual work of leading the march of a population through a wilderness.[2]

[1] In 1750 Doctor Thomas Walker, of Virginia, made a trip to the headwaters of the Kentucky River and discovered Cumberland Gap. Christopher Gist visited the Scioto River as early as 1751. In 1765 George Croghan descended the Ohio, and in 1766 James Smith explored parts of Kentucky and Tennessee. But the general public knew little of these expeditions.

[2] His grandfather before him—parent of nine sons and ten daughters—had left England because that country seemed to be getting too crowded for him. He wanted more room, so he came to America in 1717 with nine sons and two daughters, and bought a tract of land in Pennsylvania near a frontier post in Bucks County. There Daniel's father was married and lived, also with a wife and eleven children, until about the year 1752 or 1753, when he in turn felt the need of wider spaces and became one of those who joined the previously mentioned migrations toward the South. Daniel — the date of whose birth is uncertain, but which was possibly in 1732 or 1735 — was some eighteen or twenty years old when this pilgrimage took place. His youth had been spent in the necessary manner of the time, and he had already shown somewhat of those qualities of leadership in the affairs of frontier life that were later to be so much more strikingly displayed. The march of the Boone family was through the forests of Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina to the locality of its future home in the western part of the Old North State near the South Yadkin, a branch of the larger river bearing the same name. There Daniel was married and became the father of nine children.

To a well-defined hereditary instinct that demanded freedom of movement and wide areas for action had been added a youth spent on the frontier and the experience, gained at the most impressionable period of life, while his father's family was journeying through the woods. Besides all this he was fascinated by speculation regarding the country that lay beyond the mountains, to whose eastward base he often penetrated during his earlier years on the Yadkin. These qualities are believed to have resulted in a number of extensive trips toward the west for exploring and hunting purposes that may have begun as early as 1760,[1] some of which were made in company with other men and some alone. But of these half legendary expeditions nothing certain can be said. As of a large proportion of the events of the time, no contemporary evidence of them exist. Human life and action are lost behind the veil that hides those years like a thistledown that has floated away in the wind.

But with the year 1769 there begins in the pathmaker's career a period of known things. It beheld the commencement of a journey by Boone which was to arouse all the North Carolina and Virginia cabins and suggest to the dissatisfied population a means whereby they might, with one stroke, be rid of their troubles and solve the mystery of the West. In May of that year a party of six men, of whom Boone was leader, set out to penetrate far beyond the mountains into the country south of the Ohio

[1] On a beech tree that stood near the Wautaga River in the extreme eastern corner of Tennessee and west of the Great Smoky Mountains until as late as the early years of the nineteenth century, could be seen the following ancient inscription cut by the knife of a hunter:

D. Boon
Cill ED A BAR On
ThE Tree
In yEAR
1760

River.[1] For more than a month the woodsmen travelled steadily to the westward and on the seventh day of June, after several hours spent in ascending a low range of hills, they reached the top of an eminence and saw stretching away beneath them an immense and luxuriant country spread out like a map and watered by a pleasant river. Even as they looked upon the scene, and realized that their quest was done, they beheld innumerable bison and deer moving over the open spaces that lay like islands amid the sea of cane-brakes and woods. The spot from which they gazed down into the country of "Kentucke" is believed to be in Morgan County, of that state.

Here the wanderers made camp and lived and hunted for more than six months. They were in that neutral territory used by the Indians of both the North and the South as a hunting ground, and not permanently occupied by natives of any tribe. Though the red men must have known of their long journey and presence they were not molested until December, when Boone and Stuart, while on an excursion, were suddenly made prisoners. They were intruders in the sight of the Indians, who treated them with kindness and displayed no other design than to take them out of the country. On the seventh night of the captivity Boone contrived their escape without attacking the sleeping natives, and the two white men returned with caution to their camp. The other four were not there, nor from that day did any man have knowledge of them. Nevertheless the two persisted in remaining, and in the following month, while they were hunting in the woods, a younger brother of Boone[2] and another white man

[1] The other members of the expedition were John Finley (or Findley), James Moncey, Joseph Holden, William Cool and John Stuart. All were experienced frontiersmen, and, like Boone, had made previous trips in the same direction.

[2] He was Squire Boone, named after his father. The identity of the other man is unknown.

from the Yadkin calmly walked up to them. That meeting in the wilderness was an instance of the ability with which backwoodsmen came to practise the art of woodcraft. Squire Boone and his companion had come four hundred miles through unknown forests and found the objects of their search, of whose whereabouts they had no previous knowledge.[1] Soon after this incident Stuart was killed by Indians. That left three. Then Squire's unknown companion failed to come back one night, and of the eight who had left North Carolina there remained only Daniel Boone and his brother.

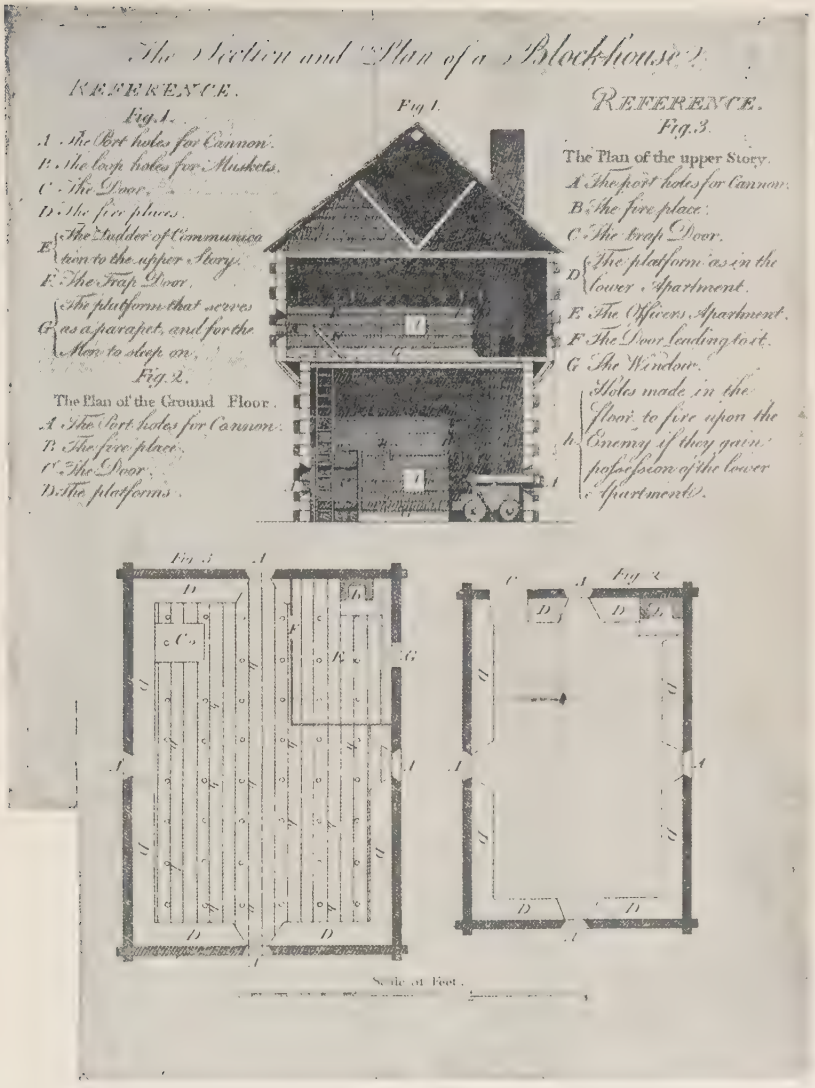
Still the survivors persisted in their sojourn, representatives of a race that was never afterward to relinquish the land. By May the ammunition of the brothers ran low and Squire spent three months in a trip to North Carolina to replenish their stock, rejoining Daniel in July. During those months Daniel Boone, solitary premonitor of white supremacy, not only evaded captivity or death by the exercise of a skill quite beyond present understanding, but actively explored central Kentucky. He gained an intimate acquaintance with the country in all its features. Of this period Boone afterward went so far as to say: "I confess I never before was under greater necessity of exercising philosophy and fortitude. A few days I passed uncomfortably." Such was his comment on a situation in which any ordinary man might have been killed in twenty-four hours or else have starved to death in a week.[2] In March of 1771, after an absence of almost two years in the wilderness, Boone suddenly appeared unscathed among his neighbors on the Yadkin.

[1] Boone's family had begun to be concerned about him, and had sent Squire to take more ammunition to the absent one

[2] Though game existed in abundance, every shot made to secure food was a proclamation of his presence and whereabouts.

It can readily be imagined with what interest Boone was greeted on his return from such a journey. His neighbors were almost excited. The time was one in which acts of valor were performed by many men, but his exploit stood out alone. It lifted him to a very high place in the estimation of those who knew of him, for the people among whom he lived were keen in estimating the character and metal of their fellows. But the degree of bravery and ability that the man had displayed was overshadowed by another feature of the expedition which his tale presented. His elaborate description of the distant region into which he had penetrated was so inviting that its desirability as a place for white habitation was apparent, and at once took first place in the public consideration given to the exploit. Mere bravery had always been obtainable to any extent when wanted, but here was something much more rare — news of a fair country where men such as they could live free lives, uncrowded by conditions that irked them. The fact that but two had come back of the eight who had gone away was of little consequence. Such things were trifles with which the people had always been familiar. They knew that more children would come to take the places of men that vanished and so, in time, they would win. The perils of the forest they could endure, but to hardships imposed on them by other white men they would not submit. And as though to clinch the matter Boone declared his determination to take his family into the far country where he had wandered.

His example was soon followed by similar declarations, and as the narrative of the returned traveller made its slow way through the scattered population and its significance grew into the minds of the cabin dwellers,


The Section and Plan of a Blockhouse.
REFERENCE.
Fig. 1.
A. The Port holes for Cannon.
B. The loop holes for Muskets.
C. The Door.
D. The fire places.
E. The Ladder of Communication to the upper Story.
F. The Trap Door.
G. The platforms that serves as a parapet, and for the Men to sleep on.
Fig. 2.
The Plan of the Ground Floor.
A. The Port holes for Cannon.
B. The fire place.
C. The Door.
D. The platforms.
Fig 1.
REFERENCE.
Fig. 3.
The Plan of the upper Story.
A. The port holes for Cannon.
B. The fire place.
C. The trap Door.
D. The platform as in the lower Apartment.
E. The Officers Apartment.
F. The Door leading to it.
G. The Window.
h. Holes made in the floor to fire upon the Enemy if they gain possession of the lower Apartment.
Fig 3
Fig 2
Scale of Feet.

33.—Internal arrangement and plan of the preceding blockhouse.

there arose and spread through the North Carolina and Virginia hills that final influence which was to start the American people on their long westward march.

The next two years were spent in a discussion of the impending exodus and in preparation for it. Though many were anxious to get away from the conditions that burdened them, and eager to find new homes in the distant Kentucky region, the contemplated migration could not be commenced offhand. The cabin people owned the little log huts and clearings where they lived, and their properties could not be altogether sacrificed. Such a radical and unparallelled shift demanded forethought and much preliminary arrangement, even on the part of a population so fertile in expedient and adaptibility as they were. At last seven families were ready, including the households of Daniel and Squire Boone, and after plans had been made by which the remaining five and a considerable number of other men were to join the Boones in a nearby valley, the day came for the start. It was on September 25, 1773,[1] that the course of empire began to take its westward way from the banks of the Yadkin. The Boones were joined by the remainder of the party according to arrangement, and when the two divisions of the expedition had united the cavalcade consisted of seven families, including women and numerous children of various ages, and about forty individual men.

At the head of the column marched a group of woodsmen, all, of course, bearing rifles. Some strode on foot, but many of them — perhaps the majority — were mounted on horses that walked slowly along. They wore loose hunting shirts and trousers of dressed deerskins,

[1] According to Speed, in "The Wilderness Road," and probably correct, though Hartley, in his "Life," puts the day exactly one year later.

gayly decorated with the colored fringes so widely affected as a backwoods fashion. Their feet were clad in moccasins and on their heads were many sorts of fantastic caps of skins, or of linsey-woolsey, each fashioned according to the whim of its owner. Every man was girt by a leather belt, from the right side of which hung a tomahawk to be used either as a hatchet or for some more violent purpose. On his left side he carried his hunting knife, a full powder horn, a leather pouch of home-made bullets and another larger leather pouch holding a quart or two of parched corn.[1] Each man's rifle lay with apparent carelessness within the crook of his elbow, but as he moved onward his glance swept ceaselessly — almost unknowingly — from side to side, pausing with each swing to dwell for an instant on the distance ahead. Behind this foreguard came the pack animals led by other similarly garbed men or boys, and bearing the women, small children, provisions and household goods. The women sat either on pillion saddles similar to those of the North or rode astride, as they pleased. The younger children swung in wicker baskets made from hickory withes, and two or three horses were thus loaded with the next generation, whose members had nothing to do but eat hoe-cake and count the trees.

Behind the pack animals came a small drove of pigs and several cattle — those ingredients of a domestic caravan that regulate its speed — and flanking the farm animals were still other men on horseback to keep them from straying from the proper path. A few rifle members of the expedition marched as a rear-guard behind all the rest. There was no iron-clad regularity about the progress of the group that thus made its way through the forest. Its

[1] Parched corn was an article of food always taken on forest expeditions.

individual members were constantly shifting as the men stopped to chat with the women, or as they argued with a reluctant pig, readjusted the ropes of bark that bound the burdens of the horses, or stole off into the woods to shoot a deer and bring back its carcass for the next meal. Dogs frisked about the legs of the horses, yelped with excitement as they found the scent of an animal in a nearby thicket, and distributed showers of spray after swimming some creek that the rest of the caravan had forded.

The distance covered by the marchers in the course of a day varied with the nature of the country. Perhaps the average was about ten miles of advancement. In mid-afternoon a part of the band increased its speed a little to find a camping-place, leaving the stock in care of others who brought it in an hour or so after the foremost had chosen a spot for the night's sojourn. Then each member of the expedition fell upon his appointed task. In an incredibly short time — so adept were they in such necessary duties — a snug shelter made from the limbs and foliage of trees was raised for the women and children; horses were relieved of their burdens and tethered; the stock was herded and put under guard; fires were kindled; water brought from a clear stream; huge slabs of venison were broiled on ramrods held over the hot coals; corn pones baked, and the day's labor was done. The feast was a royal one, few and simple though its ingredients were, for toil such as theirs and the air they breathed bred appetites whose mere possession was itself a luxury. People did not nibble at dainty luncheons and munch macaroons in those days; they devoured their food as a fireman throws coal into a furnace, and for the identical reason. What they ate was the fuel that carried them

34.—A timber fort. Used for the same purpose as a blockhouse, but designed to accommodate a greater number of persons. Such a structure was generally made in the shape of a hollow square, with various small buildings and a watch-tower within. Showing the line of loopholes at shoulder height.

onward. Man himself was the engine at that stage of travel.

After the meal beside the camp-fire the petticoat and juvenile divisions of the wandering army disappeared beneath the lean-to. The leather-clad men stretched out their long legs around the blazing logs, lit their clay pipes and puffed big clouds of rank tobacco smoke up toward the stars until they fell asleep, while a few still figures, that almost blended with the shadows amid which they crouched, sat with rifles ready until another dawn separated the branches of the trees.

No direful happening befell Boone's people for two weeks, and their immunity from attack by Indians up to that time had gradually — perhaps to an extent imperceptible to themselves — resulted in a slackening of those methods by which danger of the sort was best to be avoided. At any rate, while they were approaching Cumberland Gap on October 6 the men who were driving the stock allowed themselves to fall behind the main body by five or six miles — which was too far — and while the two divisions of the party were so separated the rear body was surprised by a band of Cherokees, and six of its seven members were killed. Among those cut off was Boone's eldest boy, James, a fine young fellow of seventeen. The sound of the firing brought Boone and the rest back helter-skelter, but it was too late. This attack by the red men was significant of the attitude which the natives had long taken toward white movement along the whole border. They had previously allowed Boone and his small party of six to travel four hundred miles to the west, for on that occasion the whites were obviously hunters and did not, to the Indian mind, presage any general advance into or permanent occupancy of the terri-

tory so highly prized by the natives. But no sooner did the same white leader start into the forbidden region with women and children and every other plain proof of an intention to settle on the interior lands than the whites were attacked. The difference in the two groups was plain to the Indians. They looked on the white men as one tribe or allied tribes; white men's treaties and promises had often been broken, and now the proclamation of 1763 was in peril of violation also.[1] So the red men killed. It was their last resort against those strange, obstinate, grasping, palefaced people who seemed never content to stay where they once settled, but were always edging just a few miles farther in the wrong direction.[2]

Boone and the rest held a consultation after the attack and it was agreed to stop for a time in the most westward permanent white settlements, on the Clinch River in Virginia, and there await a better season and reinforcements before continuing the journey. This they did. There was no thought of abandoning the plan of proceeding to Kentucky.

The preparations being made by the people for their removal to the West had by this time come to the ears of those in authority in the two colonies affected by the agitation[3] and Governor Dunmore of Virginia, which state claimed all territory "West and Northwest" to the Mississippi River, promptly decided to find out whether the reports concerning the Kentucky region were true. So he organized for that purpose a party of frontiersmen

[1] The Cherokees who attacked Boone's column were the nation whose title to the land they held had been ignored by Johnson at the treaty of Fort Stanwix, despite his instructions.

[2] In the absence of native records it is, of course, possible to attribute the attitude of the Indians on this occasion to a different motive. Their attack may have been made merely for the pleasure of killing. A due consideration of conditions then existing, and of the past acts and character of both races must be our principal aid in determining which explanation is the more reasonable.

[3] Boone's presence in the Clinch River valley of Virginia after his temporary check spread still wider a knowledge of the western country.

and surveyors under the leadership of Captain Thomas Bullitt. Bullitt led his men over the trail to Pittsburgh, with which path through the wilderness he was familiar, and there the party built boats in which they went down the Ohio despite the dangers attending such a voyage at that time. Dunmore's expedition arrived safely in the neighborhood of the future Louisville, built the usual

35.—Pioneer ferryman navigating a small canoe by means of a setting-pole. A sketch by Joshua Shaw.

timber fort as a base of operations, explored a considerable territory and found that Boone's description of his discoveries was amply justified.

The men under Bullitt observed with amazement the migrations of the bison, which travelled through the canebrakes and forests in columns containing tens of thou-

sands. The wide roads thus made by the animals, who trampled veritable avenues through the wilderness, were at once adopted by the white men for their own use in journeying over the land and by them were called streets. From that time, and for many years afterward, buffalo streets were used as travel routes by settlers in that part of the country as they gradually pushed the herds westward. The paths created by armies of bison moving four or five abreast were driven so cleanly through the woods, and packed so firmly under the hoofs of the ponderous beasts that vegetation required years in which to reclaim them.

While Bullitt's men were still remote in the new country it became evident to Dunmore that widespread trouble with the natives was about to occur, and the governor found it necessary to send another party to warn them of the impending danger and if possible bring them back to civilization.[1] He therefore summoned Boone, and the pioneer was commissioned to attempt the task. Starting once more toward the West in June of 1774, Boone with one companion, reached the Bullitt party and conducted them safely back, making the round trip of over eight hundred miles in the remarkably short time of sixty-two days, an average of almost thirteen miles a day.[2] The expected hostilities soon began, and for a time no further important step in the impending exodus toward the West could be taken. Thus we get a glimpse of Dunmore's

[1] And a few other bold individuals who had ventured into the region on their own responsibility as a result of Boone's recital. Among the others were James Harrod and some companions who had located where Harrodsburg now stands. Their camp was at first known as Harrod's Town, or Old Town. The Harrod party held their ground for a time, though warned by Boone, and in July a party of them was attacked and dispersed. One man reached the Ohio River, hastily made a bark canoe, went down the Ohio and Mississippi in it and finally got back to Philadelphia by sea.

Still another party which was in Kentucky at the time was that of John Floyd and seven others, who had gone down the Kanawha and Ohio in canoes to the present neighborhood of Louisville, to explore and survey. The Floyd party had been sent out by Colonel George Washington and Patrick Henry. Floyd mentions a sycamore tree 37 feet in circumference. He and his men got back to the Clinch River safely in August.

[2] Boone nonchalantly speaks of having encountered "many difficulties" on the journey.

War as it affected affairs in the South. During the struggle Boone took an active part in the frontier military operations with the rank of captain. When peace had been made he went back to the settlement where his family was still waiting after the interrupted journey to Kentucky. From that point he was soon to start on the final enterprise that set in motion the general tide of westward travel.

Among those to whom Boone's exploits had most clearly revealed the future was a certain James Henderson, a judge and man of prominence in North Carolina, who as a result of the returned explorer's story had conceived the idea of acquiring and settling all the immense extent of country bounded by the Ohio, Kentucky and Cumberland Rivers.[1] For that purpose he, with eight others, organized an association known as the Transylvania Company, and got Boone to act as the representative of the company in dealing with the Indians for the desired tract. The coveted region, as distinguished from the neutral ground to the west and south of it, was claimed by the Cherokees, and to them Boone went. There is no story of what took place between him and the chiefs of the nation, but regarding several factors that led to the result of the meeting a reasonable certainty can be entertained. In the first place the red men had an admiration for Boone and respected him. He had conspicuously shown himself to be possessed of those attributes held by the natives in high esteem, whether possessed by friend or foe. It is also likely that the head men of the Cherokees read the signs of the times aright, and knew from past native experiences that if they did not then strike a bargain for the territory craved by the whites, and get

[1] Some have even suggested that Boone may have first gone beyond the mountains at the request of Henderson.

something for it, they would in the end lose their land anyway, without recompense. At all events they agreed to sell. No sooner had the pledge been given than Boone hastened away to take a certain decisive action the performance of which had depended on the result of the negotiations, meanwhile sending word to Henderson of his success. These things happened either late in February or in the earliest days of March, 1775. As soon as Henderson knew the way was clear for his company to proceed openly he hastened to Fort Wautaga, on a branch of the Holston River in North Carolina, and there on March 17, and in behalf of the Transylvania Company, he met twelve hundred natives in council and acquired the Indian title to the country just described.[1] For the land he paid a price that has been variously estimated as low as ten wagon loads of cheap goods and whisky,[2] and as high as the equivalent of ten thousand pounds sterling.

The work that Boone had hurried away to undertake was the making of the First Road through the wilderness.

[1] He had been very quiet in the preliminary work, and the extent of his plan was unrealized either by the government or people.

[2] The estimate of Dr. Smith, an English agent of Dunmore.

CHAPTER IX

BOONE'S WILDERNESS ROAD — FIRST TRAVEL ROUTE MADE BY WHITE MEN TO THE INTERIOR OF THE CONTINENT — THE WARRIORS' PATH, AND HOW BOONE USED IT — WILLIAM CALK'S DIARY OF A JOURNEY TO CAINTUCK — ITS VALUE — WHAT THE FIRST MARCHERS DID WHEN THEY REACHED THE PROMISED LAND — THE FOOD QUESTION — SOME EFFECTS OF THE WILDERNESS ROAD ON THE FORTUNES OF THE REVOLTING COLONIES

THE party which Boone gathered to aid him in laying out through the wilderness a plain way that could be followed by the emigration now to begin numbered about forty men in all. He and his woodsmen started westward from Fort Wautaga as soon as the natives had pledged themselves to hold the treaty with Henderson, leaving the Indians to await that gentleman's arrival. Pack-horses[1] carried their necessary equipment and provisions, and a few negroes were included in the expedition to care for the animals and perform camp duties during the journey. The men carried axes.

As they proceeded Boone chose the line of march, and indicated it as he went along by cutting deep notches in prominent trees with a tomahawk.[2] Behind him came

[1] The pack-saddles used at the time were made from the forked branches of trees, and were bound to the animals by broad strips of deerskin. In order to fit a horse's back the forked branches had to be of a certain peculiar shape. It is related that on one occasion an early preacher, while exhorting his people in a grove, stopped abruptly in the middle of his appeal to call the attention of the congregation to such a suitable fork in a near-by tree.

[2] The marks so made were called "blazes," and the process of thus including a line of travel was called "blazing the way," or "blazing ahead."

axmen who chopped down the small trees it was desirable to remove, though all work of that sort was avoided when possible. A détour was always preferred by moving pioneers to the labor of hewing a swathe through the woods. The chief obstacles to be overcome were undergrowth in the forest itself, or dense thickets on lands that held no large timber. Such growths were swept aside

36.—A travelling family preparing a meal over the camp-fire. All its members are wearing moccasins. Sketch by Joshua Shaw.

by the tomahawk or short-ax with hardly a pause in the slow speed of the party, and at the end of each day's march the road they had followed lay open behind them. There was no thought in Boone's mind of creating a route which would be practicable for wagons, for no such things were then used in that part of the country.[1] His idea was to make a road that would be plain for the use of horsemen,

[1] Though wagons of a certain crude type had appeared in near-by localities to the east.

footmen and drivers of live stock, even though the travellers upon it had never moved through the wilderness before. Carrying out the leader's plan as it went forward the party finally came to the Holston River at a point where a large island[1] lay, and there apparently it paused for a few days. During the first two weeks Boone had proceeded through a country more or less familiar to all who were with him, for it had often been traversed by hunting parties from settlements to the eastward. No definite path, however, had ever before been made through it by white men.

While encamped on the Holston, Boone was joined by eight other frontiersmen and a few more negroes. Two of the new white recruits were Felix Walker and Captain Twetty,[2] and in his later reference to the journey Walker described Boone as "our pilot and conductor through the wilderness to the promised land." Thus reinforced the party numbered some fifty souls, and on March 10th they again took up their progress through the woods, marking the trail with tomahawks and cutting down small timber on occasion. Still advancing in a general westwardly direction, through country he had seen on at least four previous trips, Boone and his men crossed the Clinch and Powell Rivers and came to Cumberland Gap, through which they passed.

Here Boone's route changed abruptly toward the north for a reason relating to a phase of early white travel already discussed. The Cherokees and other Indians of the South, and the Miamis and various native nations who lived north of the Ohio had for centuries made intermittent war on one another, and in times of peace had used

[1] Called "Long Island."
[2] Twetty was killed during the march and Walker badly wounded.

the land of "Kentucke" as a neutral hunting ground. In their age-long travel back and forth for those purposes the red men had made, from Cumberland Gap on the south to a point on the Ohio just opposite the present Portsmouth,[1] one of the largest and most frequented In-

37.—A loaded pack-mule. The animal's burden was conveyed in baskets made of woven willow or bark. Babies were also carried in such receptacles during journeys. Sketch by Joshua Shaw.

dian trails on the continent. From the time of its first discovery by Caucasians this travel route of the Indians was called the Warriors' Path.

Boone turned into the Warriors' Path, once again appropriating an Indian trail for white men's use. He did

[1] At the mouth of the Scioto, in Ohio.

more. He adopted that native path into the very highway along which soon swept a white horde to overwhelm the race which created it. Advancing northward on the Indian trace Boone followed it for about fifty miles through the region included in Knox and Clay counties, in the present state of Kentucky. Near where the town of Manchester stands he left the native route and again veered toward the west, abandoning the red man's trail for an equally well-defined street made by the bison. This wilderness avenue he used through the present Clay and Laurel counties until he came to Rockcastle River and then, still keeping on the bisons' street, he turned northward once more and passed over the country now embraced in Rockcastle and Madison counties until he came to the existing location of Boonesborough on the Kentucky River. There, on April 1st, he halted. The Indians had attacked his column twice, killing four of its members and wounding five others, but the work he had set out to do had been accomplished.[1] From the verge of the settlements in the East to the center of the unknown and long-sought land of "Kentucke" he had blazed a broad trail that any other man might follow, and the interior American wilderness had been penetrated for the first time according to a predetermined plan for its permanent white occupation. The work had not been one of unusual labor or hardship to the men who had performed it, for they were accustomed to such effort and danger, and Boone's adoption of existing Indian and bison routes for a considerable part of the distance had saved much time and trouble. But the significance of the newly created road in its relation to economic and political events that were soon to follow was great indeed.

[1] The road was at first known as "Boone's Trace."

A log fort was at once begun,[1] and on April 15th Boone sent a message to Judge Henderson telling the Transylvania Company of his success. In it he said: "My advice to you, sir, is to come or send as soon as possible. Your company is desired greatly, for the people are very uneasy, but are willing to stay and venture their lives with you; and now is the time to flusterate their [the Indians'] intentions, and keep the country whilst we are in it. If we give way to them now, it will ever be the case."

Henderson soon arrived, accompanied by nearly forty more men, many pack-horses and considerable equipment necessary for frontier life.[2] The reinforcement so delighted Boone that he hurried back to the Clinch River for his family and other settlers, convinced that the long awaited time for a general advance was at hand. He was right. The people of the settlements received his announcement of conditions in the "Kentucke" region with a satisfaction equal to his own, and in September or October he started westward again over the Wilderness Road that he had himself created, at the head of the first community caravan which was to make the march in uninterrupted security. His companions were twenty-six men, four women, half a dozen children in baskets and the usual live stock. At the head of this cavalcade, identical in its picturesque appearance with the one stopped by Indians on a previous occasion, he travelled safely through the forests, and at last the voices of white women, the laughter of children, the melancholy call of cattle and the squealing of pigs were heard in the promised land. By

[1] The fort was about 250 feet long by 150 feet in breadth. At each corner was a house about 20 feet square and two stories high, built of hewn logs. The four houses were connected by a continuous stockade of pointed timbers planted side by side. Along the interior of the stockade on all its sides were rows of cabins built of rough logs. The gates were thick slabs of timber hung on wooden hinges. The fort was finished on June 14th.

[2] He had started with a few wagons, but had to abandon them at the outset.

the end of the year several hundred people were established at Boonesborough, Harrod's Town and other settlements which at once sprang into being.

It is not to be imagined that Boone's Trace was in any respect an easy road to travel, in spite of the fact that families and their belongings began to move over it from the first days of its existence. It was easy only in comparison with the untouched and unexplored wilderness, through which one man alone could never have conveyed his household by his unaided strength. That was why so many people had to march together on the Wilderness Road, even after the element of danger from Indians had been eliminated from the journey. By proceeding in the old community method the mishap of one individual could be remedied by all the rest, and only in that way was organized travel possible over it. Fortunately for a modern conception of the difficulties with which a trip from the eastern settlements to "Kentucke" was made at the period in question, there exists an original diary in which the journey is described. It was written by William Calk, of Virginia, who started from Prince William county in that state on March 13, 1775, and reached Boone's fort on April 20th. Calk was one of those who went westward with Judge Henderson. No better way can be found of describing the travel conditions that then prevailed throughout the country — except on the few established highways of the Atlantic seaboard — than by quoting from Calk's record.[1] Some of his experiences were set down in the following manner:

1775, Mon. 13th — I set out from prince wm. to travel to Caintuck on tuesday Night our company all got together at Mr. Priges on

[1] Calk's original diary is still in possession of his Kentucky descendants. It was incorporated by Thomas Speed in his monograph on the Wilderness Road, published by the Filson Club, from which the extracts here quoted are taken.

38.—Backwoodsman putting his wife on a pack horse in preparation for a journey. Sketch by Joshua Shaw

rapadon which was Abraham hanks philip Drake Eanock Smith Robert Whitledge and my Self thear Abrams Dogs leg got broke by Drakes Dog.

Wednesday, 15th,—We started early from priges made a good Days travel and lodge this night at Mr. Cars on North fork James River.

Thursday, 16th—We started early it rained Chief part of the day Snowed in the Eavening very hard and was very Coald we traveled all day and got to Mr. Blocks at the foot of the Blue Ridge.

Friday 17th—We started early cross the Ridge the wind Blowsz very hard and cold and lodge at James loyls.

Monday 20th — We start early cross the ferry and lodge this night at Wm. Adamses on the head of Catauby.

Wedns 22nd —We start early and git to foart Chissel whear we git some good loaf Bread and good whiskey.

fryday 24th—we start early and turn out of the wagon Road to go across the mountains to go by Danil Smiths we loose Driver Come to a turable mountain that tired us all almost to death to git over it and we lodge this night on the Lawrel fork of holston under a granite mountain and Roast a fine fat turkey for our suppers and Eat it without aney Bread.

Satrd 25th —We start early over Some more very Bad mountains one that is called Clinch mountain and we git this night to Danil Smiths on Clinch and there we staid till thursday morning on tuesday night and wednesday morning it snowed Very hard and was very Coald and we hunted a good deal there while we staid in Rough mountains and kild three deer and one turkey Eanock Abram and I got lost tuesday night and it a snowing and Should a lain in the mountains had not I a had a pocket compas by which I got in a littel in the night and fired guns and they heard them and caim in By the Repoart.

thusd 30th — We set out again and went down to Elk gardin and there suplid our Selves With Seed Corn and irish tators then we went on a littel way I turned my hors to drive before me and he got scard ran away threw Down the Saddel Bags and broke three of our powder goards and Abrams beast Burst open a walet of corn and lost a good Deal and made a turrabel flustration amongst the Reast of the Horses Drakes mair run against a sapling and noct it down we cacht them all again and went on and lodged at John Duncans.

fryd 31st — We suplyed our Selves at Dunkans with a 103 pounds of Bacon and went on again to Brileys mill and suployed our Selves with meal[1] and lodged this night on Clinch By a large cainbraike and cuckt our Supper.

April Saturday 1st —This morning there is ice at our camp half inch thick we start early and travel this Day along a verey Bad hilley way cross one creek whear the horses almost got mired some fell in and all wet

[1] In the Clinch River valley. The travellers' last chance to supply themselves with provisions other than game.

their loads we cross Clinch River and travell till late in the Night and camp on Cove Creek having two men with us that wair pilates.[1]

mond 3rd — We start early travel Down the valey cross powels river go some through the woods without aney track[2] cross some Bad hills git in to hendersons Road[3] camp on a creek in powels valey.

Tuesday 4th — Raney we Start about 10 oclock and git down to Capt. martins in the valey where we over take Col. henderson and his Company Bound for Caintuck and there we camp this Night there they were Broiling and Eating Beef without Bread.

Wednesday 5th — Breaks away fair and we go down the valey and camp on indian Creek we had this creek to cross maney times and very bad banks Abrams saddel turned and the load all fell in we got out this Eavening and kill two Deer.

thursd 6th — this morning is a hard frost and we wait at Camp for Col. henderson and company to come up they come up about 12 oclock and we goin with them and camp there still this night waiting for some part of the company that had their horses ran away with their packs.

fryday 7th — this morning is a very bad snowey morning we still continue at Camp being in number about 40 men and some neagros this Eaven. Comes a letter from Capt. Boone[4] at caintuck of the indians doing mischief and some turns back.

Saturday 8th — We all pack up and started crost Cumberland gap about one oclock this Day Met a good many peopel turned back for fear of the indians but our Company goes on Still with good courage we came to a very ugly Creek with steep Banks and have to cross it several times on this Creek we camp this night.

tuesday 11th — this is a very loury morning and like for Rain but we all agree to start Early and we cross Cumberland River and travel Down it about 10 miles through some turrabel cainbrakes as we went down Abrams mair Ran into the River with her load and swam over he followed her and got on her and made her swim back agin it is a very raney Eavening we take up camp near Richland Creek they kill a beef Mr. Drake Bakes Bread without washing his hands we Keep Sentry[5] this Night for fear of the indians.

Wednesday 12th — this is a Raney morning But we pack up and go on we come to Richland Creek it is high we tote our packs over on a tree and swim our horses over and there we meet another Companey going Back[5] they tell such News abram and Drake is afraid to go aney farther there we camp this night.

thursday 13th — this morning the weather seems to brake and Be

[1] Evidently none of the party had ever penetrated so far to the westward.
[2] In coming down from Virginia Calk did not hit on Boone's new route until the day this extract was written.
[3] Meaning the road Boone had just blazed for the Transylvania Company.
[4] This letter was sent by Boone before the one already quoted.
[5] Those who were returning to civilization were small parties made up of men alone. The movement of entire families in caravans did not begin until the autumn of the year.

fair Abram and Drake turn Back[1] we go on and git to loral River we come to a creek Before wheare we are able to unload and to take our packs over on a log this day we meet about 20 more turning Back we are obliged to toat our packs over loral river and swim our horses one hors ran in with his pack and lost it in the river and they got it agin.

sunday 16th — cloudy and warm we start early and go on about 2 miles down the river and then turn up a creek that we crost about 50 times some very bad foards with a great Deal of very good land on it in the Eavening we git over to the waters of Caintuck and go a little down the creek and there we camp keep sentel the fore part of the night it Rains very har all night.

tuesday 18th — fair and cool and we go on about 10 oclock we meet 4 men from Boones camp that caim to conduck us on we camp this night just on the Beginning of the good land near the Blue lick they kill 2 bofelos this Eavening.

thursday 20th — this morning is clear and cool. We start early and git Down to caintuck to Boons foart about 12 o'clock where we stop they come out to meet us and welcome us in with a voley of guns.

fryday 21st — warm this Day they begin laying off lots in the town preparing for people to go to work to make corn.

Sunday 23rd — this morning the peopel meets and draws for chois of lots this is a very warm day.

monday 24th — We all view our lots and some Dont like them about 12 oclock the combses come to town and Next morning they make them a bark canew and set off down the river to meet their Companey.

wednesday 26th — We Begin Building us a house and a plaise of Defense to Keep the indians off this day we begin to live without bread.

Satterday 29th — We git our house kivered with Bark and move our things into it at Night and Begin housekeeping Eanock Smith Robert Whitledge and myself.

So ends the journal of William Calk. He and those others of whom he tells wrote chiefly in deeds, not language; with rifle and ax instead of pen and ink. By the light of camp-fires at night he traced a few words, but with his footsteps he traced the Path through the wilderness. To him more than to any other one man who made the journey over Boone's Road are later generations indebted for a picture of the conditions that accompanied the commencement of westward travel in America. Calk's narrative is short and fragmentary, but it tells more

[1] After all the trouble Abram had had with his "mair," and had overcome, it seems a pity to find that he gave up before reaching the goal.

39.—Sketch showing a traveller and his pack-horse climbing a hill against a brisk wind. In this manner Kentucky and Tennessee were first reached and settled by caravans moving over Boone's Wilderness Road. Drawn by Joshua Shaw.

than is actually set down. His diary not only suggests the toil and exhaustion of the marches and the physical difculties along the trail, but the mental attitude of the pioneers as well. It displays the brave man, the weakling and the coward; it reveals the philosophy with which those men met and surmounted hardship, and their rare moments of dejection. Only once — when he alludes to a creek which he "crost about 50 times" — does Calk display any sign of impatience, and on that occasion the irritation was doubtless due to the persistence of a comparatively petty obstacle rather than to the necessity for severe exertion. It was as though a mosquito bothered him and could not be got rid of. And the matter-of-fact way in which he refers to the coming of a new party to Boone's fort, its prompt departure in a bark canoe made by its own members, the meeting of the pioneers in popular assembly, their drawing for town lots, the building of cabins, preparations for planting and the practically instantaneous transformation of the travellers into a community of methodical habits and set purpose, unintentionally portrays the character, resourcefulness and adaptability of the people in a manner more valuable than volumes of theorizing could do it. That is why a few words like his, handed down from an earlier century by a man who has lived what he tells, are so esteemed in present days. Nothing is asked but that the spirit of a vanished time shall still live in the things he describes. The man who helps to make an empire may spell as he chooses.[1]

[1] Contemporary drawings made by men who themselves beheld the conditions of travel during the generation in which the West was first invaded are even more unusual than manuscript descriptions of the same scenes. The sketches of the sort included in these pages were recently found, and are the work of the early American artist Joshua Shaw. Certain details in them — aside from the period covered by Shaw's life — indicate that the drawings were made after the year 1800. In all essential features they reveal the people as they appeared during their journeys in the period between 1775 and 1825. The lines of the artist's pencil show that he was making his sketches from knowledge gained by his own eyes.

Notwithstanding British and Indian hostilities, the Kentucky settlers, reinforced from time to time by new accessions, not only managed to hold their own but even to undertake aggressive measures against their enemies. In 1778-79 George Rogers Clark and his buckskin-clad warriors conquered the Illinois country. Their marches on that memorable expedition, particularly the one from Kaskaskia to Vincennes in midwinter across the flooded bottom lands of the Wabash, are among the most notable achievements in western history, but they are too well known to need description here. It is sufficient to say that American domination in Kentucky, Tennessee, and the region northwest of the Ohio was a direct result of the westward movement over the Wilderness Road.

Having followed the first cabin dwellers on their journey to Kentucky, it now remains to consider what they did when they got there. For this purpose the reference made by Calk to the assemblage of the immigrants in public meeting furnishes a starting point. It was believed by the pioneer arrivals at Boone's Fort and elsewhere that the Transylvania Company was founding a practically independent self-governing community. Separated as they were from all organized governmental processes by hundreds of miles of unoccupied wilderness the early white people of Kentucky were subject to no control except that of their own choosing, and the conditions which confronted them at once showed the necessity of joint action in regulating their affairs. The most important problem was that of insuring a supply of food sufficient to maintain them until a crop could be planted and harvested. When the first parties arrived they were almost wholly dependent on the country for sustenance, but fortunately found a seemingly inexhaustible abundance

of game. The bison, deer, bear and wild turkey existed in the forests and canebrakes in such astonishing numbers that the woodsmen, experienced as they were, had no thought that the animal life about them would disappear. Yet within six weeks all the edible beasts and birds were gone and the settlements had to send hunting parties twenty miles into the woods in order to secure food. No sooner was the significance of this condition realized than the colonists formulated laws which protected the game except for food purposes, and "foreigners who came to hunt" were warned that their visits and activities were not wanted in that region. So the white men, as soon as they secured the country, adopted the policy of the Indians and by so doing justified the course previously pursued by the red men when they, as proprietors of the land, had similarly objected to the presence of alien people.

The belief of the settlers regarding the future of Henderson's project was soon altered. Both Virginia and North Carolina declared that the Transylvania Company's purchase of territory was void, and Virginia exercised proprietorship over the region until after the adoption of the Constitution.

CHAPTER X

THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FROM 1775 TO 1800 — EXTENSION AND USE OF WILDERNESS ROADS — A JUNCTION POINT IN THE FOREST — THE TRAVEL ROUTE INTO TENNESSEE — RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOREST TRAILS AND RIVERS — EARLY EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE PATHS — DESCRIPTIONS OF MOVEMENTS OVER THEM — PLACE OF WOMEN IN PIONEER LIFE AND WORK — A CHART OF WESTWARD MARCHES

SEVERAL thousand people marched over the Wilderness Road each year during the Revolution period,[1] nearly all of them starting from North Carolina and Virginia. On arriving in Kentucky every new family took up land, was presented with a log cabin by its neighbors, cleared some ground and planted corn. In the early years of the revolt against England the Kentucky settlements were often attacked by hostile red men, but without permanent effect. Twice the whites were defeated with a loss of about sixty killed, but the tide of white travel through the woods rose in such ever-increasing volume that temporary reverses were soon forgotten. The pioneers never brooded over their dead. All the attention and strength they could give were demanded by those who still lived.

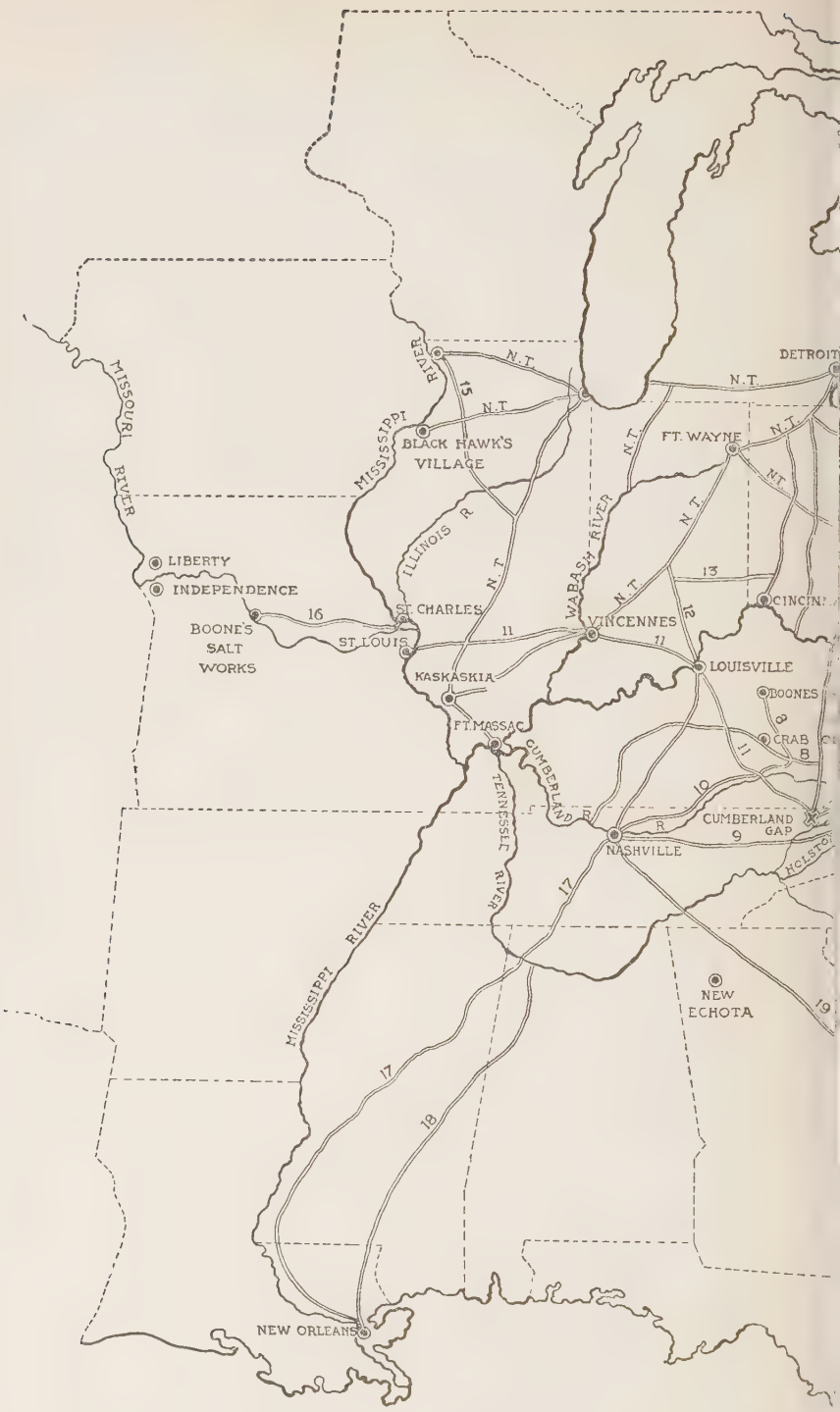
[1] Entire church congregations made the journey in a body, and on several occasions such a pilgrimage was led by the pastor, just as Hooker had conducted his people through the forests of Massachusetts long before. One of the religious organizations that travelled to Kentucky was the Baptist Church of Spottsylvania, Virginia, under the guidance of Pastor Lewis Craig. It proceeded across the country not only as a caravan of travellers but as an organized moving church.

The year 1784 found about thirty thousand people in the Kentucky region, and the immigration of that summer amounted to some twelve thousand men, women and children.[1] The overland movement still maintained a caravan character. By its increased use the Wilderness Road was being robbed of many of its difficulties, and to the one original path had been added various extensions and ramifications. A reference to the accompanying map will disclose with approximate completeness the several routes that at various times, and from different eastern localities, were used to reach the interior of the country. The relationship which these different roads bore to the general westward advance can be discussed with propriety at this point, though not all of them had become important highways of travel at quite so early a date as we have reached.

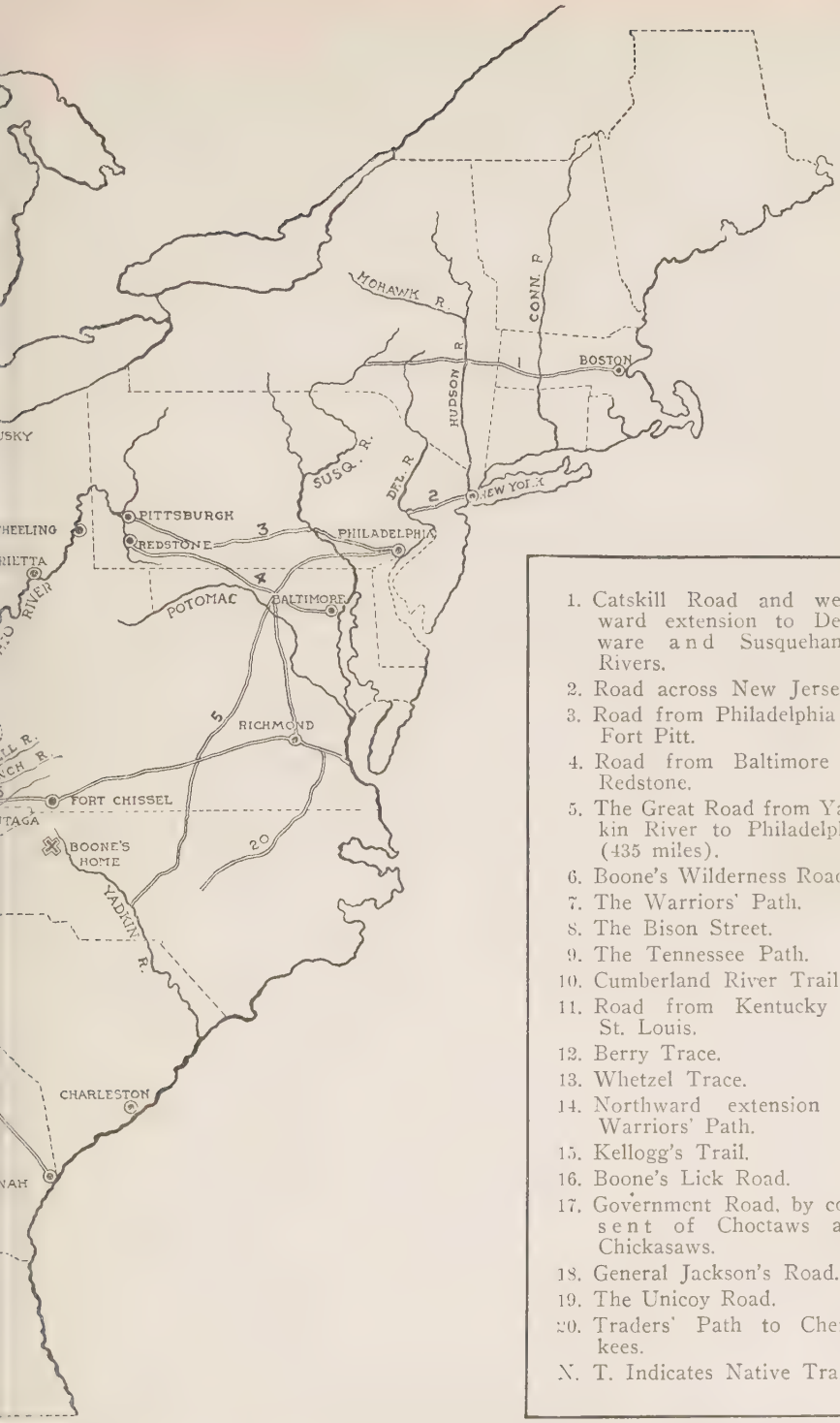
The origin and direction of Boone's Trace have already been given, and its course through the territory embraced in the map can be easily followed. Boone's actual work in marking the first road began at a point some distance to the northeast of Fort Chissel, and then proceeded to the Warriors' Path, as indicated. Within a few years the preferred route had veered from the Warriors' Path somewhat to the south of the point where Boone forsook that highway, and assumed a rather more direct line toward Boonesborough. The eastward end of the original trace marked by Boone was easily reached over rough roads, previously made, that extended westwardly from Richmond and eastern Virginia.

A route extending southwest through the valley between the Blue Ridge and Alleghany ranges was the one followed for a part of its way by Calk. He crossed

[1] Perkins' "Western Annals." Only approximate estimates can, of course, be given. It is certain that 1784 saw a great influx, and it has even been estimated that 30,000 souls went to Kentucky in that year.



Travel and Transportation System of the Pioneers th



1. Catskill Road and westward extension to Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers.
2. Road across New Jersey.
3. Road from Philadelphia to Fort Pitt.
4. Road from Baltimore to Redstone.
5. The Great Road from Yadkin River to Philadelphia (435 miles).
6. Boone's Wilderness Road.
7. The Warriors' Path.
8. The Bison Street.
9. The Tennessee Path.
10. Cumberland River Trail.
11. Road from Kentucky to St. Louis.
12. Berry Trace.
13. Whetzel Trace.
14. Northward extension of Warriors' Path.
15. Kellogg's Trail.
16. Boone's Lick Road.
17. Government Road, by consent of Choctaws and Chickasaws.
18. General Jackson's Road.
19. The Unicoy Road.
20. Traders' Path to Cherokees.

N. T. Indicates Native Trail.

n the Wilderness between the Atlantic Coast and Missouri

SOURCES OF THE FOREGOING MAP

Thomas Jeffery's "Map of the Most Inhabited Part of Virginia . . . with part of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and North Carolina: 1751."

Thomas Hutchins' "New Map of the Western Parts of Virginia, Pensilvania, Maryland and North Carolina; 1751."

Thomas Hutchins' "New Map of the Western Parts of Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland and North Carolina, etc.: 1778."

J. Russell's "Map of the State of Kentucky; with the adjoining Territories: 1794."

Cyrus Harris' "Map of the State of Kentucky and the Tennessee Government: 1796." (Engraved by Doolittle.)

Gen'l D. Smith's "Map of the Tennessee Government formerly Part of North Carolina: 1796."

Arrowsmith's "Map of the United States of North America: 1796."

Tardieu's "Carte des Etats-Unis de L'Amerique Septentrionale: 1808."

H. S. Tanner's "Ohio and Indiana: 1819."

John Melish's "Map of the United States: 1820."

over the Blue Ridge and reached Fort Chissel in nine days from the time his party started. Twelve days after leaving the fort he touched Boone's newly made path at the point where he joined Henderson's party, and continued on it thereafter. In following years a well-defined pack-horse road through the forests led all the way up through the valley to the southern boundary of Pennsylvania, where it swung to the eastward and finally reached Philadelphia. Over this, the longest of all land routes to the interior, came at a later time thousands of travellers from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Virginia. The distance from Philadelphia to Vincennes along this line of march was about eight hundred miles.

It will be seen that Fort Chissel[1] was an important junction point on all distinctively land paths made through the wilderness by white men. For many years all overland travellers, from whatever eastern community they came or wherever they were destined, converged at the little timber blockhouse for a brief pause before taking the plunge into far wilder regions beyond. East of that point the difficulty of westward progress, as well as the danger that attended it, was less in a marked degree than that encountered after it had been left behind. When at last the west-bound travel had grown to such proportions that parties passed along the various roads in almost continuous procession, the immediate neighborhood about the fort resembled the only port on a forbidding coast. Half a dozen caravans sometimes halted there in the course of a day, and the accumulation at one spot of hundreds of human pilgrims and more hundreds of horses, pigs, cows and dogs, all in the confusion of pitching camp

[1] The fort was a small blockhouse of the usual type built by the British in 1758, and intended as a protection against the Cherokees. At the time it was the extreme western outpost, though about 200 miles east of Cumberland Gap.

40.—Cumberland Gap, the gateway through the Alleghanies used during the overland migrations attending the first white invasion of the interior.

or of preparing for a fresh march, filled the forest with an uproar. Often there were a few Indians about, peaceable enough for the time being, and crouched somewhere on the outskirts of the brush to watch in silence the visible dissolution of their ancient heritage. They were no longer animated by a hope that the white flood could be turned back by any effort they could make.

A short distance to the southwest of Fort Chissel — as will be seen by a glance at the map — the early road into the wilderness became divided, and one part of it extended through northern Tennessee. The various Kentucky branches of the route merit prior examination. That part of the northernmost path extending to Boonesborough has been explained. The much longer trace, leading first to Crab Orchard, thence on through the

forest toward the present site of Louisville and across southern Indiana to Fort St. Vincent, soon came to be an even more important highway than the one over which Boone piloted his first party. Its creation was due to several causes, and covered a considerable period of time. The commencement of the trail in question came about in the following manner.

With Henderson's party of 1775 there travelled a certain Benjamin Logan, who had joined the head of the Transylvania Company on the Powell River. He and his small group of companions went along with Henderson until they all came to the Rockcastle region of Kentucky on the bison street, and there a dispute arose between the two men. As a result of the altercation Logan and a few others left Henderson and Boone's Trace near the Rockcastle hills and diverged to the westward along an Indian trail which Boone had followed when he journeyed to the Falls of the Ohio, at Dunmore's request, to bring back the surveyors. Logan kept on the trail thus selected until he reached a good country, and there established a station called Logan's Fort.[1] Other and later parties sometimes followed Logan's example; more little settlements sprang up along the route chosen by him, and so the road was pushed slowly toward the Ohio River. As boat travel increased on the Ohio the so-called falls, or rapids, which exist in that stream at Louisville became the natural stopping place of down-stream expeditions bound for the Kentucky region. There the boats were abandoned and the pioneers started inland toward the settlements established by Boone, Harrod, Logan and the rest. By the combined

[1] On one occasion, during the Revolution, Logan left his fort and companions in an effort to secure ammunition from settlements two hundred miles or more to the eastward. He got to the Holston River and back in ten days. This was one of the swiftest prolonged journeys ever made by a white man through the primeval American wilderness.

effect of those two movements a well-defined white man's path extending through the forest to the Ohio was created at an early day, and as time went on a still farther westward advance of the settlers prolonged the thoroughfare to Fort St. Vincent and St. Louis. The original Warriors' Path soon lost its native character and became a white man's road over which many immigrants passed northward through eastern Kentucky. A few of those who came down the Ohio also disembarked at the river end of the big Indian trail and marched south upon it to their destinations.

The road into Tennessee, as it appears on the map, was not the first route by which permanent white settlers penetrated into that district. In the very earliest years of the invasion the Tennessee people followed Boone's Trace to the point of Logan's divergence, then continued on Logan's path for a short distance and finally, leaving it also, swung through the woods until they came to a trail which followed in a general way the course of the Cumberland River. Then they kept on along the Cumberland until they found a locality that pleased them, and struck south into the present Tennessee. Many went in this manner as far as the site of Nashville.

But by the year 1783[1] a new and better method of getting into northern and middle Tennessee had been found, and this later route is shown on the map here given. Travellers to the Tennessee region followed existing roads from the East until well past Fort Chissel. There they left the old trail that led to Kentucky, and at the southern extremity of the Clinch range — or Clinch Mountain, as it was then called — proceeded in a line almost due west, through the country now included in Roane, Fentress,

[1] Speed's "Wilderness Road," pp. 63-4.

White, Jackson, Smith, Wilson, Sumner and Davidson counties until the site of Nashville was reached. Later this road was extended still farther west. The Tennessee path was a very popular line of march and was not only used by the future Tennesseeans, but by many who intended to take up land in southern Kentucky. Those on the road who were making for the Kentucky settlements left the Tennessee trail near the present Gallatin,[1] crossed the Cumberland River and turned north. In that fashion much of southern Kentucky received its first white population.

The Tennessee path lay through a territory less rough than that traversed by the original Wilderness Road, and became possible for wagon use within a short time after its adoption. It remained a great overland highway between the eastern seacoast and the interior until the introduction of steamboats on the western rivers destroyed its usefulness as a through line of travel. During its early years of importance the Cherokees, from their nearby mountain homes, gazed with resentment at the human traffic that moved back and forth upon it, but no longer fell with swift fury on the travellers to destroy them.[2] It was of this road that Senator Mason of Virginia spoke in the national Senate in 1802 when describing the western country and its travel facilities. "The pilgrim into those regions," said the Senator, "will have to pass through the country of the Cherokee Indian, nearly one hundred miles over the Cumberland Mountains, where he will be exposed to every inclemency of the weather without a shelter to retire to, for there is not a house nor a hut in the whole journey; a journey in which all travellers are obliged at

[1] In Sumner county, Tennessee.
[2] Although the worst element of the red nation did often rob white wayfarers.

all times and of unavoidable necessity to sleep one night at least, and from the fall of rains and rise of water-courses often many nights, without a roof to cover them from the beating of the storm, and moreover where they

41.—Overland travellers pausing at the top of a hill during their march through the wilderness.

are liable at every stop to be robbed by the Indians, as I myself experienced passing through that wilderness."

One further glance at the map will reveal the relationship between the land and water routes that led into the West. The earliest stages of the invasion of the interior were characterized by mass movements of the population overland, for in spite of the difficulties of such a journey it was preferred to the greater dangers which for a time

attended a trip down the Ohio.[1] The slow moving flatboats by means of which family or community migrations took place were so entirely at the mercy of the current, so exposed to wreck or so open to attack from Indians along the shores and in swift canoes, that a large majority of those who joined the westward hegira when it first began avoided the water and followed the footsteps of Boone, Calk, Henderson, Logan and the other land pioneers. Boats were chosen by a certain number of those who went to Kentucky in the first years of its occupation, but the extensive and finally predominant use of the Ohio system of rivers as highways of western travel was a somewhat later phase of the conquest.

But in the course of time the advance of the population along natural waterways did become the distinguishing feature of American travel, and on the accompanying map are to be found the several land routes by which the interior waters were reached from various eastern localities. In the northeast there existed a trail through Massachusetts[2] over which the New Englanders came to the Hudson River. Once having attained that stream they had a choice of many ways by which their migrations might be continued. They could float south on the river and with little difficulty join the throngs passing over the wilderness roads; they could go to the north and take a route to the lakes and the Northwest,[3] or an overland march through New York to the Susquehanna would bring them to the headwaters of the Delaware Bay region. Those who lived in New York, eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey could do as the New England people did. Two lines of travel led out of Philadelphia.

[1] The experiences of those who travelled by water will be described in later chapters.
[2] Already mentioned.
[3] By way of the Mohawk and Oswego Rivers of New York.

Besides the one already mentioned, another, as shown on the map, extended directly west through the center of Pennsylvania to Pittsburgh and the headwaters of the Ohio. A similar trail that afterward like all the rest grew into a wagon road, connected Baltimore[1] with Redstone[2] on the Monongahela River. From Richmond a path led northwest through Virginia until it joined the trace from Baltimore just east of the Alleghany Mountains, and by that method the upper Ohio was gained from the Old Dominion. All these roads came into active use soon after the first penetration of the wilderness took place, and they, together with the waters which they touched, constituted the only extensive American travel routes during the generation which witnessed the eruption of population from the coast region into the interior. It was over such a transportation system that the people journeyed, amid difficulties and with a slowness no longer to be realized, as they began their conquest of the continent. A trip to Kentucky from the East, if expeditiously performed and free from accident, required from one month to two months for its accomplishment. The time spent on the road depended on the season of the year and point of departure.

There was one feature of the travels undertaken by the southern cabin dwellers in their exodus to the West that in principle furnishes a sharp contrast to later conditions. To-day all land transportation routes are laid out by scientists for the purpose of avoiding, if possible, every deviation from a horizontal level. Grades are abhorred, and if found to be inevitable, they are reduced to the

[1] The road from Baltimore passed for a part of its extent over the route taken by Braddock in his expedition. Fifty years later a section of it was incorporated in the National Turnpike, which was built by the government and in the heyday of stage-coach times formed an unbroken artery from the Atlantic to Indiana, Illinois and St. Louis.

[2] Now Brownsville, Pa.

lowest obtainable degree by every expedient of engineering. Water courses and valleys have therefore been looked upon with favor by the builders of modern man-created routes of travel. Not so with the pioneers who opened the overland way into the West. They shunned the continued proximity of rivers, crossed a stream or valley instead of following it, climbed mountains and

42.—A common incident of life in the Kentucky forest during the contest for racial supremacy there.

went stubbornly onward.[1] They moved like an army of ants, and fixing their eyes toward a distant land marched as directly as the country and their own powers would let them, surmounting each obstacle as it appeared until they reached the goal.

So many of the hill people of Virginia had started

[1] The increased use of tunnel and bridge construction by railroads in recent years is developing a tendency, on the part of modern travel systems, to return in a measure to the direct-line principle of the pioneers.

over the wilderness paths during the first four years of the exodus that the colonial legislature took official notice of the migration and recognized the need of a better means of travel to the western country. It passed an act in 1779 giving to certain officials the duty of laying out the most suitable line for a road, and of clearing it so that footmen and pack-horses could journey toward the west with least trouble. Provision was made for guarding the surveyors and laborers from hostile attack. Some work was done under this act and the original trace was thereby improved, but no horse-drawn, four-wheeled wagon was seen on it for sixteen years thereafter. In 1792 the Kentucky settlers themselves took up the matter of improving their communications with the East, and a considerable number of the most influential men among them subscribed a fund of several hundred pounds for bettering the first Wilderness Road. With the money so obtained a large force was put to work. The men were given two shillings and sixpence for a day's labor.[1]

Kentucky's first legislation in connection with the travel trails through the forest was an act passed in 1793. It related to guarding Boone's Trace by blockhouses, the enlistment of men for the purpose, and their pay. During 1794 the state provided for improving a part of the trace between Boonesborough and the neighborhood of Rockcastle River, where Logan's trail diverged from it, in order to provide an easier road between Boonesborough and the settlements in the vicinity of Crab Orchard. In 1795 the lawmakers passed a bill entitled "An act opening a Wagon Road to Cumberland Gap." This was the first legislation in the West dealing with the question of travel facilities. When it was placed on the statute books, far

[1] Speed's "Wilderness Road," pp. 47-50.

out in the interior forests, the present city of Buffalo was a trifling settlement less than a year old, and the white people of New York state had but recently established themselves west of the Susquehanna River.[1] Two thousand pounds were appropriated by the bill for the construction of the road, which was to extend from Cumberland Gap, along existing trails, to Crab Orchard. It was to be suitable for wagons and carriages. Other similar official action followed, and within a few years vehicles could make the entire trip over the path that Boone had marked with his hatchet as he pushed his way through the thickets and woods at the head of his little band of axmen.[2]

Travel by way of the wilderness roads continued to grow steadily, and when they became highways on which wagons could be used the extent of the traffic upon them was increased in an amazing degree.[3] Nor did the human tide flow over them in one direction only. The forest trails were but one of two ways of going to the West; for coming back with any degree of speed they were for a long time the only way. It was feasible to drop down the Ohio with the flow of the water, but a quick return to the East against the current of the river was out of the question. During the earliest years of the western invasion such a thing was not considered. All who were compelled to make the trip to the original colonies went back across the mountains and rivers.

The chief consideration of travellers in America up to about the last quarter of the eighteenth century had

[1] Binghamton and Elmira were settled in 1787, Ithaca in 1784, Auburn in 1793 and Buffalo in 1794. The Susquehanna was the limit of white settlements in New York until after the Revolution.

[2] Speed points out the tribute to Boone that lay in the after action of Kentucky. He says: "It required a mind of far more than ordinary calibre to locate through more than two hundred miles of mountain wilderness a way of travel which, for a hundred years, has remained practically unchanged, and upon which the state has stamped its approval by the expenditure of vast sums of money for its improvement." p. 29.

[3] By the year 1790 Kentucky had 73,000 white inhabitants and in 1800 the population was 220,000.

never been a desire to save time, but to proceed in safety and with as much comfort[1] as was possible. There were always some people who had legitimate cause for hurry, but they did not permit that state of affairs to make them careless. They preferred to pursue their way slowly and finish the journey intact, rather than to go a part of the distance lickety-split[2] and then fall off a mountain or run into an ambuscade. Ordinary conditions of existence were sufficiently enlivening without seeking further excitement through the medium of hasty and careless movement from place to place. The pioneers took a full measure of caution with them into the West, and so, when one of them foresaw the need of a journey back to the coast he made inquiry among the community to seek others of like mind. In that way parties for the return were slowly made up, and occasionally weeks went by before all were ready. Often a man would put a written statement of his intention on his cabin door and so secure companions. After newspapers were established their columns were employed to distribute such notices. One of the early Kentucky papers, the *Kentucky Gazette*,[3] contained many an announcement of the sort. A typical notice read: "A large company will start from the Crab Orchard on the 20th of Feb, in order to go through the Wilderness."

There were few tearful partings when the appointed day came. The women and children who were left behind in the care of their neighbors knew quite well what might happen — and often did happen — but the good-bys were usually spoken with more stolidity and matter-of-factness than prevail on similar occasions to-day. They

[1] Perhaps it would be better to say with as little discomfort.
[2] The pioneers used the phrase for indicating swift motion, and may have originated it.
[3] Published at Lexington in 1787.

43.—Town-people as they appeared in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, during the period indicated by the preceding sixteen illustrations. Showing the more pretentious costumes of the cities. Backwoodsmen did not use buttons on their clothes as ornaments. The cabin dwellers deemed useless buttons, shoes and purchased hats to be signs of foppery and affectation. Sketch by Joshua Shaw.

were a people who of necessity, and by long habit and inherited custom, concealed their deeper emotions. For had they given way to the strain of their existence and allowed the uncertainty amid which they lived to overwhelm their thoughts and veto action they must have collapsed, as a social organization, utterly.[1] A singular

[1] "An old lady who had been in the forts was describing to Dr. Brown the scenes she had witnessed in those times of peril and adventure; and, among other things, remarked that during the first two years of her residence in Kentucky, the most comely sight she beheld, was seeing a young man dying in his bed a natural death. She had been familiar with blood, and carnage and death, but in all those cases the sufferers were the victims of the Indian tomahawk and scalping knife; and that on an occasion when a young man was taken sick and died, after the usual manner of nature, she said the rest of the women sat up all night, gazing upon him as an object of beauty."—Bogart's "Daniel Boone."

Doubtless the playful roystering of the pioneers; their display of mirth and enjoyment over very trivial matters, and an insatiate seeking for such amusement and sport as their situation permitted, was an involuntary effort to strike a natural balance in the display of feeling.

restraint governed their outward recognition and acknowledgment of surrounding conditions. In the records they have left it is observed that gravest emergencies, and the expedients by which those events were met, are mentioned —if at all—in a brief and most commonplace way. Some things were not to be dwelt upon. They were well known. That was sufficient. So the partings were soon over, and the group of those who were going back for a time to the distant countries of the East disappeared in the forest. Months later some or all of them came back, dropped their packs on the cabin floors and went to work again.

One of the best and most dependable among the few connected narratives of the conditions that distinguished travel over the Wilderness Road is to be found in an address delivered by Chief Justice Robertson of Kentucky, in 1843. He was describing what had been told to him by his father and mother, who had made the journey in 1779. He said:

"This beneficent enactment [law under which settlers could acquire land] brought to the country during the fall and winter of that year an unexampled tide of emigrants, who, exchanging all the comforts of their native society and homes for settlements for themselves and their children here, came like pilgrims to a wilderness to be made secure by their arms and habitable by the toil of their lives. Through privations incredible and perils thick, thousands of men, women, and children came in successive caravans, forming continuous streams of human beings, horses, cattle and other domestic animals, all moving onward along a lonely and houseless path to a wild and cheerless land. Cast your eyes back on that long procession, . . . behold the men on foot with their trusty guns on their shoulders, driving stock and leading packhorses; and the women, some walking with pails on their heads, others riding with children in their laps, and other children swung in baskets on horses, fastened to the tails of others going before; see them encamped at night, expecting to be massacred by Indians; behold them in the month of December, in that ever-memorable season of unprecedented cold called the 'hard winter,' traveling two or

three miles a day, frequently in danger of being frozen or killed by the falling of horses on the icy and almost impassable trace, and subsisting on stinted allowances of stale bread and meat; but now lastly look at them at the destined fort, perhaps on the eve of merry Christmas, when met by the hearty welcome of friends who had come before, and cheered by fresh buffalo meat and parched corn, they rejoice at their deliverance, and resolve to be contented with their lot."

But two more things remain to be said regarding the first extensive travels undertaken by the English speaking population in America. The journey of seventy thousand people through the wilderness to Kentucky, important as it was, can not fairly be called a general movement. It did not originate in an impulse that had swept over and affected the people of all the colonies. In its early and decisive stages the exodus was a local one, affecting only a comparatively small section of the country. For a number of years the Kentucky settlements and the white men's trail that led to them could be likened to a long, narrow peninsula of Caucasian civilization that jutted out for four hundred miles into unknown regions, and was surrounded by them on all sides save that from which the travelled road connected it with the East. Not until the Congress of the confederated colonies, in 1787, passed the Ordinance for the government of the Territory of the United States Northwest of the River Ohio[1] was there manifested such a general public interest in the western country as produced a migration to it from all parts of the new nation. With that governmental action, and the popular response which followed it, the sectional causes which had led to the first invasion of Kentucky were swallowed up in a general and national advance.

The remaining feature of the cabin dwellers' life

[1] The ordinance was applied to the territory south of the Ohio in 1790.

which must enlist attention in these pages concerns the fundamental character of their social structure—the basis on which was built the deeds they performed. Let us take our last view of them through the words of an early commentator.[1] He says:

"Could there be happiness or comfort in such dwellings

44.—A view showing the type of early houses in the towns, and the usual condition of their streets. The scene is in Philadelphia, opposite Independence Hall.

and such a state of society? To those who are accustomed to modern refinements,[2] the truth appears like fable. The early occupants of log-cabins were among the most happy of mankind. Exercise and excitement gave them health; they were practically equal; common danger made them

[1] The extract is one quoted by Ramsay in his "Annals of Tennessee." Ramsay does not give the author.

[2] The "refinements" of the early 19th century are meant.

mutually dependent; brilliant hopes of future wealth and distinction led them on; and as there was ample room for all, and as each newcomer increased individual and general security, there was little room for that envy, jealousy, and hatred which constitute a large portion of human misery in older societies. Never were the story, the joke, the song, and the laugh better enjoyed than upon the hewed blocks, or puncheon stools, around the roaring log fire of the early western settler. The lyre of Apollo was not hailed with more delight in primitive Greece than the advent of the first fiddler among the dwellers of the wilderness; and the polished daughters of the East never enjoyed themselves half so well, moving to the music of a full band, upon the elastic floor of their ornamental ballroom, as did the daughters of the emigrants, keeping time to a self-taught fiddler, on the bare earth or puncheon floor of the primitive log-cabin. . . . There we behold woman in her true glory; not a doll to carry silks and jewels; not a puppet to be dawdled by fops, an idol of profane adoration reverenced to-day, discarded to-morrow; admired but not respected. . . . We see her as a wife, partaking of the cares, and guiding the labors of her husband, and by her domestic diligence spreading cheerfulness all round; . . . placing all her joy, all her happiness, in the merited approbation of the man she loves. As a mother, we find her the affectionate, the ardent instructress of the children she has reared from infancy, and trained up to thought and virtue, to meditation and benevolence; addressing them as rational beings, and preparing them to become men and women in their turn."

* * *

"Droop not, brother, as we go
Over the mountains, westward ho,
Under boughs of mistletoe
Log huts we'll rear,
While herds of deer and buffalo
Furnish the cheer;
File over the mountains, steady, boys;
For game afar
We have our rifles ready, boys,
Aha!

Cheer up, brothers, as we go
Over the mountains, westward ho,
When we've wood and prairie land
Won by our toil,
We'll reign like Kings in fairyland,
Lords of the soil,
Then westward ho in legions, boys,
For freedom's star
Points to her sunset regions, boys,
Aha!" [1]

[1] A chant for overland westward movers.

CHAPTER XI

UNIVERSAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES, RATHER THAN POLITICS OR WARS, THE COMPELLING FORCE OF A REAL NATIONAL UNITY — INTRODUCTION OF REGULARITY AND PERIODICITY IN TRAVEL — ITS CAUSES AND CIRCUMSTANCES — UNHEEDED GROWTH OF THE PRINCIPLE AND ITS FINAL EFFECT — REGULAR STAGE-COACHES APPEAR — THE FOUR-WHEELED FLYING MACHINE — TRAVEL CONDITIONS BETWEEN PHILADELPHIA, NEW YORK, BOSTON AND BALTIMORE — DESCRIPTIONS BY TRAVELLERS — THE "STEP-LIVELY" ERA BEGINS

WHILE the activities just traced were prevailing in the South an altogether different state of affairs existed in the northern colonies. Three-quarters of a century had been required to produce the movement toward the interior from North Carolina and Virginia, and that phenomenon was destined to be the chief contribution of the South toward the development of a future national transportation system. All her energy and restlessness were gathered into one tremendous effort along a path of progress that the North could not tread. The surge of the southern white people across the mountains was a logical and perhaps inevitable outgrowth of the social and natural conditions that existed in the region whence it started. Those conditions, as has been noted, were in no way similar to the ones which had pre-

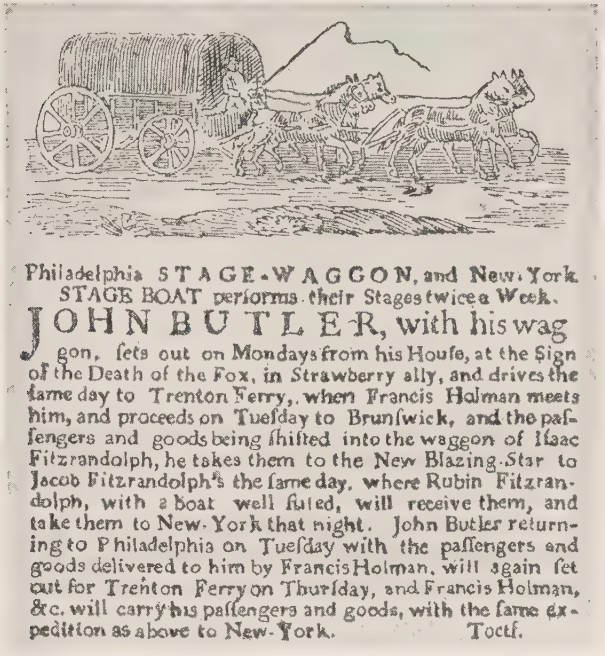
vailed from the first in the settled sections to the northward. The people of New England and the middle colonies had always showed a tendency to gather into or near compact communities, instead of adopting the plantation and cabin system that chiefly distinguished the lower commonwealths.[1] And just as the southern mode of life found its expression in the exodus to the unknown West, so also did the northern habits of living control the methods by which its advancement toward better facilities of travel was made. The natures of the two sorts of progress that distinguished the two sections were radically variant. One was an outburst of supremely important action founded on a deep-seated impulse that called for wide, free, pioneer movement. The other — that of the North—was a slow, long-continued, almost automatic process which had for its purpose the improvement of short paths from one spot to another spot near by. It, in turn, was based on the highly developed gregarious instinct that has always characterized the American man of the North; a dependence on the mass rather than on self; a craving for crowds and to be part of the crowd, no matter what discomfort his desire inflicted on him.[2]

There were two results of those northern habits of living in groups and constantly treading the same path, and in time they came to shape the entire transportation system of the country and dictate every detail of its operation. One effect was the speedy transformation of a few original primitive routes into successively better arteries of travel as increasing popula-

[1] According to the census of 1910 more than forty per cent. of the population of the northern states is concentrated in cities of 25,000 or more. In the South the corresponding ratio is about twelve per cent. These figures fairly indicate the relative intensities of the gregarious habit in the two sections during every period of their history.

[2] The quality in question is as pronounced to-day as it ever was, and its effect on present travel conditions in congested localities is well known.

tion cried out for such improvement. The other result was the establishment of periodicity and regularity as the primary features of every sort of traffic that moves from one place to another throughout the continent. Those



Philadelphia STAGE-WAGGON, and New-York STAGE BOAT performs their Stages twice a Week.

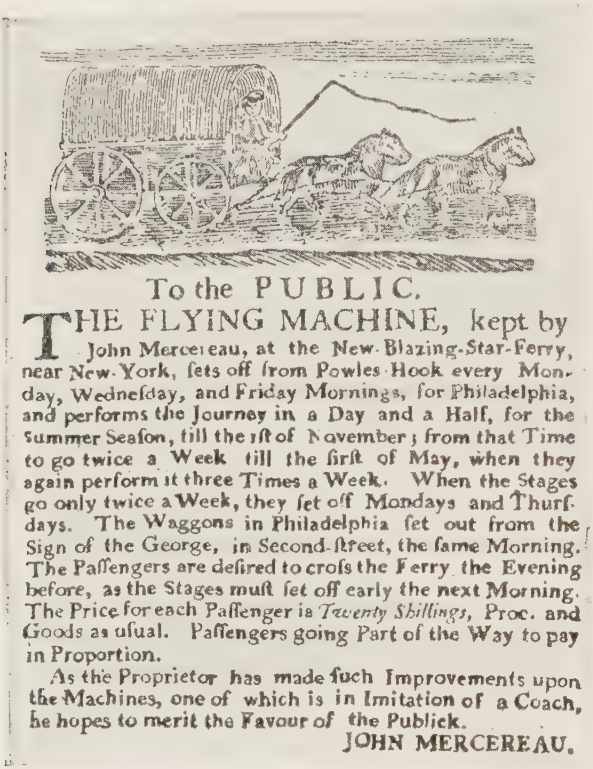
JOHN BUTLER, with his wagon, ſets out on Mondays from his Houſe, at the Sign of the Death of the Fox, in Strawberry ally, and drives the ſame day to Trenton Ferry, when Francis Holman meets him, and proceeds on Tueſday to Brunſwick, and the paſſengers and goods being ſhifted into the waggon of Iſaac Fitzrandolph, he takes them to the New Blazing-Star to Jacob Fitzrandolph's the ſame day, where Rubin Fitzrandolph, with a boat well fitted, will receive them, and take them to New-York that night. John Butler returning to Philadelphia on Tueſday with the paſſengers and goods delivered to him by Francis Holman, will again ſet out for Trenton Ferry on Thurſday, and Francis Holman, &c. will carry his paſſengers and goods, with the ſame expedition as above to New-York. Tocti.

45.—Advertisement of a stage wagon such as ran regularly between Philadelphia and New York about 1750. Both passengers and goods were carried. Periodicity in the movement of travel conveyances in America had been introduced in 1732, over the same route.

were the things that came to pass because the people of the North originally gathered together in towns and forever trotted back and forth over the same old trails. Such consequences, though slower of ultimate realization and unforeseen by those who brought them about, were to be no less important to the country's future than was the eruption that conquered the wilderness. Each section,

in its own way, did the thing it could best do at a time when there was no coördination of action between them.

North and South had not yet united their conflicting and inharmonious methods and characters into one organ-



To the PUBLIC.

THE FLYING MACHINE, kept by John Mercereau, at the New-Blazing-Star-Ferry, near New-York, ſets off from Powles-Hook every Monday, Wedneſday, and Friday Mornings, for Philadelphia, and performs the Journey in a Day and a Half, for the Summer Seaſon, till the 1ſt of November; from that Time to go twice a Week till the firſt of May, when they again perform it three Times a Week. When the Stages go only twice a Week, they ſet off Mondays and Thurſdays. The Waggons in Philadelphia ſet out from the Sign of the George, in Second-ſtreet, the ſame Morning. The Paſſengers are deſired to croſs the Ferry the Evening before, as the Stages muſt ſet off early the next Morning. The Price for each Paſſenger is *Twenty Shillings*, Proc. and Goods as uſual. Paſſengers going Part of the Way to pay in Proportion.

As the Proprietor has made ſuch Improvements upon the Machines, one of which is in Imitation of a Coach, he hopes to merit the Favour of the Publick.

JOHN MERCEREAU.

46.—Mercereau's stage wagon, in 1771, reduced the time between Philadelphia and New York to a day and a half. In celebration of the achievement he advertised his conveyance as "The Flying Machine."

ism, and even when they did so the principal bond of national union, being at first political and arbitrary in character, lacked for a long time the elements that are necessary for the welding of a country into a nation. The day of a real unity in aspiration and action was only to be

reached through the creation of social and economic conditions which would bring to every American a realization that all other men between the oceans, no matter how distant, were nevertheless his neighbors and friends. For the accomplishment of such a result all the inhabitants had to be brought so close together that they could become acquainted with one another, and understand that in fundamental things their best interests and common welfare were not dependent on sectional residence or affected by distance. Those geographical considerations had to be annihilated.

The importance of certain features of life in the northern colonies that finally—in the eighteenth century—led to the establishment of periodic and regular movement from place to place will thus be seen. The fabric of our modern travel system acquired its vital characteristic at that time. It was through the influence of transportation methods and their improvement and expansion, rather than by politics or wars, that a real national unity was at last created. Some attention should therefore be given to those conditions out of which grew the new phase of travel history in America.

Previous to about the year 1725, the time at which a traveller set forth on his journey was dependent on his own desire, and the date of his arrival at his destination was altogether a matter of chance. He was quite satisfied to get there, and the usual delay of a day or a week in going a hundred miles or so did not seriously bother him. The transaction of all the affairs of life was accompanied by a certain elasticity and vagueness of arrangement whose necessity, due to the uncertainties of communication, was recognized. A man in New York, instead of telephoning to his friend in Philadelphia, "I'll meet you in two hours

and talk it over," sent a letter which said, "I now expect to start one week from to-morrow, and hope to see you by the following Friday or Saturday." Perhaps he did; but if he didn't, no matter; he was reasonably sure to get there by Sunday or Monday, and that would do just as well. If he did not own a horse and could not hire one, he secured passage in one of the big, awkward wagons that had begun to appear on the road across New Jersey between Perth Amboy and Burlington soon after the year 1700. Those wagons were used both for the transportation of passengers and freight. They were drawn by four or six horses, often painted in gaudy colors, and were covered with canvas tops stretched on arched strips of wood. The wheels were big, and had tires from six to ten inches wide made of hard wood or thin iron.[1] The passenger made himself as comfortable as he could, and lodged in the tavern where his conveyance halted for the night. He finished the trip from Burlington to Philadelphia by sailboat, just as he had crossed New York Bay to reach Perth Amboy.

The owners of the wagons had no stated intervals for the trips, but made them whenever sufficient inducement was offered. In the year 1707 this road across New Jersey became the theater of the first American transportation monopoly of which there is any account. Governor Cornbury gave the exclusive right of conducting traffic to a few men acting together. The Assembly protested, and in answer to the complaint Cornbury said: "At present, everybody is sure, once a fortnight, to have an opportunity of sending any quantity of goods, great or small, at reasonable rates, without being in danger of imposition; and the sending of this wagon is so far from

[1] Many of the two-wheeled carts used through all the colonies at an early day had wheels that were sections sawed bodily from a round tree trunk.

being a grievance or a monopoly, that by this means, and no other, a trade has been carried on between Philadelphia, Burlington, Amboy and New York, which was never known before, and in all probability never would have been."[1] The monopoly lasted for only a few years, and the twice-a-month wagon between the two cities can hardly be called the introduction of the element of regularity into land transportation.[2] In truth the roads did not yet permit of the establishment of travel facilities as a business enterprise. During a considerable part of the year they were little else than mud-holes of a length equal to the distance between the two points they connected, and from ten to twenty feet wide. No important bridges had yet been built in the colonies, and few of any sort. No stream more than a few yards in width had been spanned by such a structure[3] and the

[1] The governor was short-sighted. To-day he could make five or six round trips between the two cities in twenty-four hours, using only regular public conveyances.

[2] One of the factors that no doubt contributed to the establishment of regular trips for stage wagons (the first periodic travel vehicles in America) was the early postal service, which did attain at times a slight semblance of regularity. The carriers travelled on horses. A summary of the development of the primitive post is here given:

1673.—First land conveyance of letters between New York and Boston. Time, three weeks.

1692.—Attempt to establish postal service in Virginia. Result a failure. Cause, "the dispersed condition of the inhabitants."

1717.—Mails carried from Boston to Virginia in one month during the summer; in winter the time was two months.

1720.—Regular mail from Philadelphia to New York once a week. Time of trip three days.

1729.—Regular mail each way between the same cities; once a week in the summer and twice a month in winter. Time of trip, two and a half days.

1754.—Franklin made Colonial Postmaster. He reduced the trip between New York and Philadelphia to about thirty-six hours and sent mails three times every week, except in winter, when two mails a week were despatched.

1755.—Franklin established a weekly mail between Philadelphia and Boston and announced with some pride that a letter might be sent from one city to the other, and an answer received, in three weeks. The time for such service was thus cut exactly in half.

1764.—Mails between Philadelphia and New York carried in twenty-four hours, by relay, and letters sent every other day.

1790.—Regular mails between Boston and New York. Time, five days. Sent three times a week.

The times given fairly indicate the swiftest travel between the towns named.

[3] The law passed by Pennsylvania colony in 1683 is an example of early bridge and highway legislation. In part it read as follows:

"Bridges shall be built over all small creeks and rivers that are difficult, or apt to be high by sudden Rain, in the King's highway, . . . which bridges shall be ten feet broad and a rail on each side; and that all trees stubbs, and stumps of trees, that lie in, and cross the said highway, and all passages [meaning fords] in and out of creeks and branches may be made safe and easy both for horse and cart, at the charge of the respective counties.

" . . . And such overseers shall summon in all their inhabitants of the respective limits, to come in and work at the making of all highways and bridges therein, upon penalty of five pounds . . . "

traveller had to cross every river worthy of the name in a ferry boat or encamp on the bank until the subsidence of a freshet permitted him, in a few days, to proceed. None of the early laws relating to the establishment of ferries[1] and the rates of toll exacted for their use make

47.—A stage wagon such as was used in the East from about 1780 until 1800. It followed the Flying Machine variety of conveyance, and was an intermediate link between the canvas-covered wagon and the later stage-coach. Similar to the colored engraving reproduced as the frontispiece to Volume I.

mention of wheeled vehicles of any sort. The Pennsylvania ferry acts of 1683, 1690 and 1693 refer to packhorses, and to hogs, sheep and other farm animals, and fix a rate of "two pence a head for carrying over every

[1] The first ferries were single canoes, or two or more such craft lashed together. The second type was a wide, flat-bottomed plank boat moved by pole or oars. The third sort was a similar flatboat pulled across the stream by a rope or propelled by sails.

person, and with a horse, four pence." The New Jersey ferry legislation of 1716[1] only named toll rates for a "single person" or for "horse and man."

Then came a first inkling of what the future held in store. Road vehicles appeared and multiplied. The primitive two-wheeled cart and heavy, slow moving wagon, in neither of which could rivers be crossed or long journeys made, blossomed into land craft designed exclusively for travel purposes. The change took place during the years between 1716 and 1723, and, as might be expected, on the road between Philadelphia and New York. Pennsylvania colony established the ferry across the Schuylkill River between Philadelphia and the eastern shore of that stream in 1723, and in the law then enacted is to be found a recognition of the new conditions which had arisen. The ferry charges were: "For a coach or chariot,[2] one shilling. For a chaise[3] of four wheels, six pence. For a chaise of two wheels, four pence. For a cart or wagon, with their loading, one shilling; and without loading, six pence. For a sled, loaded or unloaded, one penny." Soon the highway between the two towns became busy with various types of equipages, more taverns sprang up along the route for the accommodation of wayfarers and the road itself, under the pressure of necessity, was made fit for the first stage wagons and the establishment of public conveyances as a distinct and separate commercial enterprise.

Periodicity and regularity as elements of travel in America seem to have appeared—so far as the records

[1] Dealing with the ferry over the Raritan, at New Brunswick, which had been established in 1696.

[2] A four-wheeled vehicle with the body entirely enclosed, and used exclusively for travel purposes.

[3] The chaise has been mentioned. It was a "chair" with a covered top. The two-wheeled chaise somewhat resembled a modern sulky with a leather rain shelter.

show—in the year 1732[1] and the men who first introduced those features into the transportation system of the continent were Solomon Smith and James Moore, of Burlington, New Jersey. The Philadelphia *Mercury,* in March of that year, contained the following announcement:

"This is to give notice unto gentlemen, merchants, tradesmen, travellers and others, that Solomon Smith and James Moore, of Burlington, keepeth two stage wagons intending to go from Burlington to Amboy, and back from Amboy to Burlington again, once every week or oftener if that business presents. They have also a very good storehouse, very commodious for the storing of any sort of merchants' goods free from any charges, where good care will be taken of all sorts of goods."

From that advertisement and the little business whose establishment it proclaims have grown all the schedules, time tables, railway stations, freight depots and the whole complex system of movement which has become the chief and indispensable feature of modern American life. Small thought did its originators give to the nature of the enterprise whose seed they planted. Yet the principle of organizing and selling periodic transportation was destined to creep unheeded over the land by such slow and imperceptible degrees, and with so many alterations in its outward appearance and its relations to the public need, that it had become the master of all men and the arbiter of their affairs before the people awoke to an understanding of its relation to them and the country. At last they have realized what it means. Had they appreciated at an early day the potencies which lay concealed within that principle there is little doubt that the history of the last few generations would have been differently written. The legacy bequeathed by Solomon

[1] The event may have occurred a little earlier without any prominent contemporary record of it. If so, the first regular transportation of travellers no doubt took place in the neighborhood of Boston.

48.—A stage wagon of 1798 passing through High Street, in Philadelphia. Similar to the preceding, but more heavily built. Even over good roads, coaches of this weight could only make five or six miles an hour when pulled by four horses.

Smith and James Moore has become one of the foremost problems of the present and future.

The passengers in the stage wagons of Solomon and James bounced over the road for about a week and in due course came to their destination. Other similar lines of regular public conveyances were soon established. Another road across New Jersey,[1] over which travellers between New York and Philadelphia went by way of New Brunswick and Bordentown, was made the route of rival stages in 1734. The proprietor guaranteed that his vehicle would make the trip "once a week if wind and weather permit." A line which was started in 1744 took people back and forth between Trenton and New Brunswick twice a week. Still another pioneer in the new business appealed to the public for patronage in 1750. He said he "had a stage boat well fitted for the purpose, which, wind and weather permitting, would leave New York every Wednesday for the ferry at Amboy on Thursday, where, on Friday, a stage wagon would be ready to proceed immediately to Bordentown, where they would take another stage boat to Philadelphia." This system of boats and wagons hurried travellers over the ninety miles in about five days, and the proprietor boasted that his conveyances reduced the previous time for the journey by about forty-eight hours. Within a twelve-month the growing demand of the public for convenience and comfort in travel was reflected in the announcement of a new company to the effect that its boat between New York and Amboy possessed a cabin, and was fitted with a table and other luxuries.

The year 1756 found a brisk competition for passenger traffic between the two cities, and the time consumed on

[1] It had existed for some time.

the way was still further reduced to three days. In an advertisement giving the itinerary by which this miracle was accomplished the proprietors of the wagons said: "It is hoped, that as these Stages are attended with a considerable Expense, for the better accommodating Passengers, that they will merit the Favours of the Publick; and whoever will be pleased to favour them with their Custom, shall be kindly used, and have due Attendance given them."

Besides the reduction in time of passage resulting from this competition, the contest between various proprietors of wagons produced the first public exhibition of jealousy, based on transportation rivalry, which appeared in the colonies. The proprietor of a new line was aggrieved at uncomplimentary criticisms of his enterprise scattered broadcast by opposing stage owners, and in reply he published the following advertisement:

Philadelphia, November 11, 1756.

Bordentown Stage Continued.

Joseph Borden's stage boat, Joseph Canida master, attends at the crooked-billet wharf every monday and tuesday, and his shallop, Daniel Harrison Master, at the same place every friday and saturday, stage waggons attends the said boats, the stageboat at Amboy commanded by Aaron Edwards. As to the owners of the Burlington stage boasting of their advantages being superior to mine, I shall not take the trouble to make reply too, because the publick by this time is the best judges of our stages and their advantages, only shall just note the last clause of their advertisement, that is, they say we are one tide more upon the water, than they are, which in fact, is saying we are always two tides upon one passage. Well done brother adventurers, that is a large one. All gentlemen and ladies, that please to favour me with their business, may depend upon the utmost care and dispatch, of their humble servant.

Joseph Borden.

Every hour clipped off the usual time of passage by the lumbering vehicles inspired a proud proclamation to the public. The suffering travellers, sitting on their benches during such a record trip, and bounced about

in the springless wagons like corn in a popper, clutched one another in desperation while they gasped out their admiration and delight at the privilege of participating in the memorable event. If the trip was a slow one they held on just the same, and grumbled over the wretched accommodations and disgraceful delay. The cry was ever for more speed. The "step-lively" era had begun. By 1771 the public demand for hurry as a prime consideration of travel had become so marked that the trip from New York to Philadelphia was made in a day and a half, and the proprietor of the pre-Revolutionary express which sped over the distance in that amazing time was blessed with an inspiration. He named his wagon *The Flying Machine*.[1] In reality the advertised day and a half was nearly two days, for the west-bound wagon left Amboy at three o'clock in the morning, and an intending passenger had to depart from New York by sailboat on the previous evening in order to secure his seat. The fare between the two towns was twenty shillings, and additional expense of meals and lodging brought the total cost of the journey each way to about twenty-six shillings, or six dollars and a half.

As the owner of *The Flying Machine* says in his advertisement, one of his wagons was made in imitation of a coach. The old-fashioned vehicle which appeared soon after the year 1700, and that had remained in use with almost no alteration for nearly three quarters of a century, during the first part of which period it had carried both passengers and freight, was at last evolving into the first distinctive type of land craft exclusively used for human travel in America. The archaic wagon was distinguished by its straight sides and tunnel-shaped top

[1] See reproduction of the vehicle in Mercereau's advertisement.

made of linsey-woolsey or some similar heavy woven material. It contained three or four wooden benches with no backs, that extended from side to side of the vehicle. There were, of course, no springs. The first changes marking the transformation of such a wagon into the

49.—Another coach deviating still further from the archaic form and suggesting the football-shaped vehicle that was soon to appear.

earliest form of stage-coach were the flattening of its top and the adoption of side curtains made of leather or wool. The benches and their arrangement for a time remained the same, and a passenger had to climb over the foremost seats to reach those in the rear. Next, the benches were equipped with boards or strips of leather for backs, the body of the wagon was increased in height and built more substantially, and was still later increased slightly in its width. Finally the seats for passengers were set on wrought-iron springs, or held up by yielding leather

straps. Such public equipages were still painted in bright colors, and were drawn by four horses which were changed every few miles.

A description of the trip from New York to Philadelphia in the *Flying Diligence* after the journey had been still further reduced to about sixteen hours of actual land travel is found in a record of that time.[1]

"Between three and four in the morning," the narrator says, "we set off in the stage, rode nine miles to Bergen Neck, and then crossed a ferry which brought us to Woodbridge. Just before we reached the second ferry we perceived the dawn of day, and, when we were two miles from it, the sun rose, so that we had ridden sixteen miles and crossed two ferries before sunrise, besides shifting horses twice. The third stage brought us to Brunswick, where we breakfasted. We crossed the Raritan in a scow, open at both ends to receive and discharge the carriage without unharnessing or dismounting, and the scow was pulled across the river by a rope. We passed through Princeton about noon, and got to Trenton for dinner; then passed the Delaware in another scow which was navigated only by setting poles; drove thirty miles over a plain, level country at a great rate, and arrived in Philadelphia at sunset."

Periodic and regular travel by means of similar stage wagons between Boston and other New England towns, and between Boston and New York, was speedily established. The Boston *Post* newspaper of 1767 contained an advertisement announcing the opening of a line between that city and Providence, in Rhode Island Plantations, and before the Revolution similar enterprises connected all the important places in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island. Land travel to upper New England had always been exceedingly slow and difficult, and still remained so. When Franklin became postmaster of the Colonies, in 1754, the trip from Philadelphia to Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, required eighteen days, and a considerable part of the journey could only be per-

[1] Belknap's "History of New Hampshire."

formed on horseback.[1] The absence of numerous compact groups of population, coupled with the physical roughness of the country and the distances to be traversed, were conditions which necessarily postponed the introduction of travel periodicity in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

The earliest stages that made through trips from Boston to New York were more than a week on the way.[2] Their introduction was delayed both by the condition of the roads and the greater physical comfort that attended a trip by water. Sailboats could be depended on to convey their passengers between the two cities as quickly as wagons, save under exceptional weather conditions.[3] One of the few early descriptions of a journey from Boston to New York in a primitive stage-coach is that of President Josiah Quincy, of Harvard College. He tells of it thus:

"I set out from Boston in the line of stages of an enterprising Yankee, Pease by name;[4] considered a method of transportation of wonderful expedition. The journey to New York took up a week. The carriages were old and shackling, and much of the harness of ropes. We reached our resting place for the night, if no accident intervened, at 10 o'clock, and, after a frugal supper, went to bed with a notice that we should be called at three which generally proved to be half-past two, and then, whether it snowed or rained, the traveller must rise and make ready, by the help of a horn lantern and a farthing candle, and proceed on his way over bad roads, sometimes getting out to help the coachman lift the coach out of a quagmire or rut, and arrived in New York after a week's hard travelling, wondering at the ease, as well as the expedition, with which our journey was effected." The fare was about two pounds and a half.

[1] When Daniel Webster came to Massachusetts to attend school in 1796 he made the trip from New Hampshire on horseback.
Webster, in speaking of travel conditions in New England in 1805, said: "Stages then no more ran into the center of New Hampshire than they ran to Baffins Bay."

[2] It took Washington twelve days to go from Philadelphia to Boston in 1775, on his way to assume command of the Continental army.

[3] The Boston and Providence newspapers published between 1780 and 1790 contained advertisements of passenger sailboats plying between those cities and New York. The fare on them was usually 20 or 24 shillings. Meals were 10 or 12 shillings extra.

[4] Pease was one of the prominent stage-coach proprietors of the time, and established numerous lines between many towns.

Those were the conditions under which a man was transported between the two cities in the early years of periodic travel. He spent nineteen hours a day either bouncing in or pushing his own conveyance, and was then allowed four hours in which to obtain sleep before setting forth again, without any breakfast, on another day of similar exertion. At the end of a week of like experiences the traveller "wondered at the ease as well as the expedition" with which he had reached his journey's end.

But things improved on that road, just as they did over the route to Philadelphia, and by 1793 the ordinary man could journey from Boston to New York in four days, along smoother highways, and at a cost of three pence (six cents) a mile. He could, in fact, do even better than that. The demand for speed had become so urgent that an express line existed for the accommodation of those whose business admitted of no delay, and which whirled the traveller to New York in three days and a half. An advertisement announcing the creation of these unusual facilities was printed in the *Columbian Sentinel* of April 24, and read:

> Boston and New York Stages. The subscriber informs his friends and the public that he, in company with the other proprietors of the old line of stages, has established a new line from Boston to New York for the more rapid conveyance of the mails. The stage carriages of this new line will be small, genteel and easy, in which but four inside passengers will be admitted, with smart, good horses, and experienced and careful drivers. They will start from Boston and New York on the first Monday in May, and continue to run three times a week until the first of November, and will leave Boston every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at four oclock a. m. and arrive at New York in three days and a half from their departure. They will leave New York on the same days at one oclock P. M. . . . The proprietors have been at such great expense to erect this line, they hope their exertions will give satisfaction and receive the public patronage."

For this express service the fare was four pence (eight

Providence and Philadelphia Packets.

THE following vessels have commenced running as a line of Packets between the above ports :

Schr. Herald, Ahira Hall, master
Messenger, Edward Hall, do
Domestick, David Hall, do
James Burrill, Abner Hall, do

All excellent vessels, and well commanded, one of which is expected to sail every week from this port. The captains have the privilege of acting as their own pilots. For freight or passage apply on board, or to ROYAL FARNUM.

May 23. tf.

50.—Travel between widely separated towns on the Atlantic coast was undertaken by water when possible. The method was preferable to jolting over the bad roads. Regular lines of sailing packets were established to accommodate the business, and even after the general adoption of steamboats they successfully fought, for a time, the competition of the new mechanical vessels. Advertisement of a packet line in 1825.

cents) a mile, with fourteen pounds of baggage carried free.

Still another much travelled road on which periodic movement became important at an early day, and whereon an unusual condition prevailed, was that between Philadelphia and Baltimore. The early stage wagons along this route were the familiar vehicles with straight sides and tunnel-shaped canvas tops, and they made the journey in two days. One line between the two towns was called "The Philadelphia, Baltimore and Eastern Shore Line of Post-Coach Carriages," and in the Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer* of 1788 its running schedule and rates of fare for passengers were thus stated:

"From Philadelphia to Chester, 15 miles	£0. 5s. 0d.
"From Chester to Queen of France, 7 miles	£0. 2s. 6d.
"Queen of France to Wilmington, 6 miles	£0. 2s. 6d.
"Wilmington to Christiana Bridge, 10 miles	£0. 3s. 4d.
"Christiana Bridge to Elk, 12 miles	£0. 4s. 2d.
"Elk to Susquehanna, 16 miles	£0. 7s. 6d.
"Philadelphia to Susquehanna, 66 miles	£1. 5s. 0d.

"Susquehanna to Baltimore, 37 miles, gratis."

So the traveller paid about six dollars and twenty-five cents for his passage, and bought his meals and lodging besides. The uncommon feature revealed in the operation of these wagons lay in the fact that for a part of the distance they encountered the competition of sailboats and other passenger-carrying water craft, and for that part of their land journey they charged no fare whatever.

It should not be understood that any uniformity of travel conditions existed throughout the northern colonies during the two generations which witnessed the introduction and first slow growth of periodic movement as an element of progress. The contrary was true. Local circumstances, the weather, and the state of the roads still ruled

traffic with almost arbitrary power. Between a few of the chief centers of population there took place, from year to year, a slight and steady improvement, but elsewhere the former conditions still prevailed without much alteration. It was a time of change, and of contrast and contradiction. The old order of things was giving way in places, and the need of betterment in methods of locomotion received a more general recognition. But over a large portion of the territory then firmly in the grasp of white men the physical obstacles to travel were still too great for any rapid progress to be made. The chronicles of the time show that occasionally there was even a lapse in the tendency toward better things, and a retrogression. In discussing traffic between Philadelphia and Baltimore at as late a date as 1797 a publication of the day[1] said:

"The roads from Philadelphia to Baltimore exhibit, for the greater part of the way, an aspect of savage desolation. Chasms to the depth of six, eight, or ten feet occur at numerous intervals. A stage-coach which left Philadelphia on the 5th of February, 1796, took five days to go to Baltimore. The weather for the first four days was good. The roads are in fearful condition. Coaches are overturned, passengers killed, and horses destroyed by the overwork put upon them. In winter sometimes no stage sets out for two weeks."

Such a state of affairs as here described portrays, in substance, the whole aspect of human movement from place to place during the later part of the eighteenth century. The traveller never knew what to expect or what adventure he might encounter. Yet on the whole advancement was apparent, and if the state of the country and the absence of any engineering knowledge held the people back, there had nevertheless been born within them an impatience that in time was to work the marvels then unconceived.

[1] "The American Annual Register" for 1797.

CHAPTER XII

THE ERA OF THE PACK-TRAIN — GENERAL USE OF THAT METHOD OF TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION THROUGHOUT MUCH OF THE COUNTRY — OPPOSITION BY PACK-HORSE MEN TO THE INTRODUCTION OF WHEELED VEHICLES — CONDITIONS IN PENNSYLVANIA — TWENTY DAYS TO PITTSBURGH — APPEARANCE OF THE CONESTOGA WAGON — ITS LONG-CONTINUED IMPORTANCE — WINTER TRAVEL MOST POPULAR

THE British authorities on one occasion reproved the colonial legislature of Pennsylvania for not assembling with promptitude at critical times, when warfare threatened, in order that it might take appropriate action for the public welfare. In answer the Assembly pointed out that the roads were often so bad they were impassable even on horseback, and therefore the desired laws would have to wait. What retort the English made is not of record. It is enough to know that the explanation of the Pennsylvanians was sufficient, if not satisfactory.

The incident is a typical one. It throws a light, with official glare, on a problem which came home to every early American. The introduction of carts and wagons in some sections of the northern colonies during the early part of the eighteenth century, and the later evolution of the four-wheeled vehicles into stage wagons, acted as an ever-increasing impetus toward the creation of better highways. A pressing need for such thoroughfares was

51.—Interior of the cabin on a sailing packet having accommodations for about two dozen passengers. The dining-room by day and sleeping quarters at night. A contemporary pencil sketch. Probably about 1830.

more than plain. Nevertheless the roads did not improve. During any long-continued period of dry weather they became easily passable, only to be turned again, during wet seasons, into hopeless quagmires. No radical betterment was visible for more than fifty years after the stage wagons appeared.[1] This was due to several reasons. There was then no such thing as a knowledge of the proper way of road construction, nor was there any organized system put into effect for the carrying out of improvements. The mutual jealousies of the colonies occasionally cropped out over such a matter as the building of a travel highway, and now and then it happened that the proposed transformation of some primitive trail into a better road was actively fought by that part of the public whose ma-

[1] Nor was there any such development in road building, or the creation of permanent turnpikes with hard surfaces, until close to the year 1800.

terial interests would have suffered — at least for a time — by the suggested action.

There really were such people. They were the men who had built up the extensive business of pack-horse transportation. An overwhelming part of the land traffic of the country, except on highways connecting the principal cities, was carried on, between the years 1750 and 1790, by that means. It was an age of pack-horse travel. Pioneers in that sort of traffic were to be found in almost every town, especially toward the outskirts of the occupied regions,[1] and they controlled many thousands of horses and mules and employed large numbers of packers and caravan drivers. They regularly contracted to move parties of people over the country, together with their goods, and all the freight business of outlying settlements was carried on by them. The narrow land trails, called "tote-roads," "pack-roads," or "horse-ways" by the pioneers, over which frontier movement passed for a long time, were the foundation on which their enterprises were built, and they knew that so long as those paths remained unfit for vehicles their business would remain secure. Therefore they opposed the making of wagon roads.[2]

The pack-horse system of travel was more important and largely developed in Pennsylvania than in any other colony, and even at so late a date as 1783 the only way of carrying goods from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, or of journeying between the two towns, was by that method. In Pittsburgh and other similarly inaccessible places salt was sold for five or ten dollars a bushel, and iron was worth from fifteen to twenty-five cents a pound.

[1] Philadelphia was one of the chief centers for them.

[2] In the history of the development of travel and transportation facilities, every improvement in method of movement has been opposed by those whose occupation depended on the maintenance of the system about to be abandoned.

A so-called wagon road, after it had developed from an Indian trace or white man's tote-path, was usually a narrow winding trail across the country, made of nothing but the natural soil. The first effort toward improvement of such a highway, as displayed in many localities, consisted in placing a multitude of small logs side by side across it. Over the logs was spread a layer of dirt two or three inches thick, and the improved thoroughfare was complete. It was then a corduroy road. There was no lack of timber for the purpose, but the work of cutting the trees and placing them side by side for many miles was so great that not much construction of the character was attempted. No vehicle could sink into the morass on a trail thus altered, but the dirt surface was promptly washed through the logs and the jolting soon shook a wagon to pieces. The economic advantage of the corduroy system, as it was at first applied, amounted to almost nothing. It was as unpleasant for a man to behold his wagon disintegrate as to abandon it in a sea of mud; worse, in truth, for in the latter case he could come back after a month or two and dig it out again. Gradually the people fell into a lethargy on the subject of road improvement—as far as outward action was concerned—and for a generation or more made no effort to move about on extensive trips except during favorable weather. They were also, during long periods, prevented by wars and poverty from making serious attempts through governmental means to improve their system of travel and communication. From the year 1755 to the close of the Revolution the country was in almost uninterrupted military turmoil. The struggle between England and France, Pontiac's War, the ceaseless embroilments along the frontiers and the contest with England collectively cov-

ered a period of nearly thirty years, within which time the only important progress in transportation was confined to a few highways between the half-dozen principal towns of the northern colonies.

Simultaneously with the general introduction of the first stage-coaches, however, two other important features of the early national travel system sprang into existence, and the Pennsylvania colony witnessed the birth of each. One of these was the cutting of Braddock's Road[1] through the wilderness, and the other was the appearance of a famous and indispensable pioneer conveyance known as the Conestoga wagon.

Braddock could not move his troops without wagons to carry supplies, and he could not use wagons without a road. At first he had neither. No path possible for vehicles existed along the western portion of his intended route, and at the order of the Pennsylvania Assembly a force of woodsmen was accordingly got together to widen the existing trail by chopping down enough of the forest to permit the passage of his transport train. Then Braddock called on Virginia and Maryland for wagons, but the two colonies collected only twenty-five.

In desperation he appealed to Franklin, and that official, by means of an elaborate printed address to the public, secured one hundred and fifty four-wheeled vehicles from Pennsylvania.[2] The brave but misguided general finally led his little army away over the new road, and on the disastrous field that bears his name compelled his veteran troops to stand shoulder to shoulder while the

[1] The highway is too well known to require more than brief mention. It followed an earlier Indian trail, and was cut through the woods to enable the British army under General Braddock to pass over the Alleghany Mountains and attack the French, whose chief stronghold in the Ohio valley was Fort Du Quesne.

[2] Franklin agreed that their owners should be paid if the wagons were not returned. They were all lost in the defeat, and Franklin was appalled at the prospect of his ruin until the British paid £20,000 for the destroyed equipment and horses.

52.—Many families who lived on the coast, or near bays or rivers, kept little covered boats for use in journey making, just as a farmer or business man of the twentieth century keeps a motor-car.

Indians, from behind their trees, enjoyed the human battue.

After the war between England and France Braddock's Road became one of the principal routes by which travellers from the northern and middle colonies advanced through central and western Pennsylvania to the Alleghany region, and the pack-horse train was the only method by which they moved themselves and their goods back and forth between the older towns and the frontier posts. Those immigrants who were making the trip toward the frontier for the first time journeyed in large groups, in the immemorial method, and also carried on their later intercourse with the coast region in a somewhat similar way. During the autumn of each year all the border inhabitants within a radius of ten, twenty or twenty-five miles contributed their joint efforts to the creation of a pack-train by which they sent furs and skins and whisky to the eastern towns in exchange for such necessities as they could not themselves produce. They had no money, and could obtain iron, salt and a few other commodities only in that manner.

In fact, the Whisky Rebellion of 1794 was a direct result of this transportation problem. To carry bulky grain and fruit to the eastern market was impracticable, so many of the settlers converted their surplus of such products into whisky and brandy. A horse could carry two kegs of eight gallons each, worth about fifty cents a gallon on the western and one dollar on the eastern side of the mountains, and he came back with a little iron and salt. The Federal excise tax of 1791 bore hard on the trans-Alleghany people, and those in western Pennsylvania rose in armed rebellion but were overawed by an army sent into the region by President Washington.

The organization and progress of a pack-train is thus described in the work of an early historian.[1]

"In the fall of the year, after seeding time, every family formed an association with some of their neighbors, for starting the little caravan. A master driver was to be selected from among them, who was to be assisted by one or more young men and sometimes a boy or two. The horses were fitted out with pack-saddles, to the latter part of which was fastened a pair of hobbles made of hickory withes,—a bell and collar[2] ornamented their necks. The bags provided for the conveyance of the salt were filled with feed for the horses; on the journey a part of this feed was left at convenient stages on the way down, to support the return of the caravan. Large wallets well filled with bread, jerk,[3] boiled ham, and cheese furnished a provision for the drivers. At night, after feeding, the horses, whether put in pasture or turned out into the woods, were hobbled and the bells were opened. The barter for salt and iron was made first at Baltimore; Frederick, Hagerstown, Oldtown, and Fort Cumberland, in succession, became the places of exchange. Each horse carried two bushels of alum salt, weighing eighty-four pounds to the bushel. This, to be sure, was not a heavy load for the horses, but it was enough, considering the scanty subsistence allowed them on the journey. The common price of a bushel of alum salt, at an early period was a good cow and a calf."

The appearance that such a cavalcade presented while on its march and the nature of the travel route over which it proceeded were told by another writer of earlier times,[4] who said:

"The whole amount of hide and peltries, ginseng, snake-root, and bears grease[5] were exchanged or bartered for salt, nails, and other articles of iron, and occasionally for a few pewter plates and dishes for the table. The bartering for the settlement being finished, the caravan was ready for its retrograde march. . . . The caravan route from the Ohio River to Frederick crossed the stupendous ranges of the Allegheny mountains as they rise, mountain behind mountain, in the distant prospect. . . . The path, scarcely two feet wide, and traveled by horses in single file, roamed over hill and dale, through mountain defile, over craggy steeps, beneath impending rocks, and around points of dizzy heights, where one false step might hurl horse and rider into the abyss below. To prevent such accidents, the bulky baggage was

[1] Doddridge's "Notes on the Settlements and Indian Wars": chap. 13.
[2] The horse collar was often made of woven corn husks.
[3] Smoked venison or bear meat.
[4] Monette: "History of the Valley of the Mississippi": Vol. ii, p. 14.
[5] An early family remedy highly esteemed.

removed in passing the dangerous defiles, to secure the horse from being thrown from his scanty foothold. This route, selected by experienced woodsmen, differed but little from that selected for turnpikes and railroads by professed engineers at a much later day. . . . The horses, with their packs, were marched along in single file, the foremost led by the leader of the caravan, while each successive horse was tethered to the pack-saddle of the horse before him. A driver followed behind, to keep an eye upon the proper adjustment of the packs, and to urge on any horse that was disposed to lag. In this way two men could manage a caravan of ten or fifteen horses. . . . When night came, a temporary camp and a camp-fire protected the weary travels."

Those who were going into the newly settled country for the first time joined an experienced caravan whenever possible. Twenty days or more, according to the state of the weather and trail, were required to pass over Braddock's Road by pack-train from the Atlantic coast to the head waters of the Ohio. The extent to which pack-trains were relied on as the one method of travel and transportation throughout many parts of the colonies as recently as the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and the causes that led professional pack-men to oppose the building of roads for wheeled vehicles, were referred to by a third writer who long ago discussed the period in question.[1] He wrote:

"Sixty or seventy years ago[2] five hundred pack-horses had been at one time in Carlisle, going thence to Shippensburg, Fort Loudon and further westward. . . . The pack-horses used to carry bars of iron on their backs; crooked over and around their bodies; barrels or kegs were hung on each side of these. Colonel Snyder, of Chambersburg, in a conversation with the writer in August, 1845, said that he cleared many a day from $6 to $8 in crooking or bending iron and shoeing horses for western carriers at the time he was carrying on a blacksmith shop in the town of Chambersburg. . . . When the bridle path passed along declivities or over hills, the path was in some places washed out so deep that the packs or burdens came in contact with the ground or other impending obstacles, and were frequently displaced. . . . When wagons were first introduced, the carriers considered that mode of

[1] Rupp: "The History and Topography of Dauphin . . . [and] Cumberland Counties [Pa.]": pp. 376-377.
[2] The words were written in 1848.

53.—A Conestoga wagon. The frigate of early overland travel and transportation in America. First appearing in Pennsylvania about the middle of the eighteenth century, it survived until the California rush a hundred years afterward.

transportation an invasion of their rights; their indignation was more excited and they manifested greater rancor than did the regular teamsters[1] when the line of single teams was started some thirty years ago."

So, while the roads leading out from Boston, Providence, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore were witnessing the first introduction and early rivalries of the stage wagons and Flying Machines, the remainder of the northern and middle section was still dependent on the pole-boat, saddle-horse and pack-train.

The second important development witnessed in Pennsylvania about the middle of the eighteenth century — the first use of the Conestoga wagon — became noticeable during the decade between 1750 and 1760. The peculiar type of pioneer vehicle thus evolved remained in persistent use during all advance movements of the population for about a century. As the frontier inhabited by

[1] These teamsters were the drivers of four and six-horse Conestoga wagons, which had followed pack-trains, and that were in turn succeeded by the two-horse vehicles here mentioned, as the dirt roads were changed to turnpikes covered with gravel or broken stone.

white men was steadily pushed toward the west for generation after generation the Conestoga wagon was always in the van of travel progress, always years ahead of the stage-coach, the steamboat, canal and railroad. The ruts that were dug deep into the soil by its wide and ponderous wheels were the marks that guided all other vehicle movement by land. Its career as one of the agencies by which white men conquered the continent came to a fitting end in the period between 1848 and 1869, when by its use the final migration across the western plains was accomplished, and there was no longer any West to which it might continue.

The travel conditions which confronted the early inhabitants of Pennsylvania were in several respects different from those faced by the other colonists. There was no considerable seacoast that permitted movement from one part of the commonwealth to another by means of sailboats, the interior was not sprinkled by lakes or traversed by many rivers of the placid and navigable type found in other parts of the country, and much of the colony's extent was rough or mountainous. Necessity forced its people to resort to land travel for journeys of consequence, and to that circumstance was due the widespread use of the pack-train within its limits, and its early efforts to solve the problems of the roads. To necessity can also be attributed the creation of the Conestoga wagon, which, though at first evolved to fit conditions in the neighborhood of its origin, was speedily adopted, with slight modifications, for all long overland migrations and heavy traffic throughout the country.

The precise reason for the name of the vehicle is uncertain. A breed of very heavy horses had already been developed in the valley of the Conestoga, and had com-

54.—An overland wagon of the Conestoga type approaching Baltimore. On busy roads such vehicles were frequently seen in trains half a mile or more in length.

manded wide notice. Probably the wagon was first built in the same region,[1] or else acquired its name from the type of horse with which it was no doubt associated in its earliest days. A Conestoga wagon was a huge affair, very heavily built, with a bed higher at each end than in the middle, and topped by a dull-white cloth cover which had a similar curve of still more pronounced degree. The wagon bed was constructed in concave shape in order that its contents might not spill out when it was going up or down hill. Still another distinguishing characteristic of the conveyance was its color. The underbody was always painted blue, and the upper woodwork was invariably bright red. This chromatic scheme was as inevitable

[1] Lancaster county.

for every Conestoga wagon as though it had been prescribed by law with a penalty for refusal so to decorate.[1]

No sooner was a road made fit for vehicles than the Conestoga wagon appeared upon it, sometimes in solitary grandeur as its owner and his family and household goods moved slowly over hill and valley toward a new home to the westward; sometimes in immense and brilliant caravans that stretched for miles along the highway. There was a majesty in their slow progress. The rumble of their enormous wheels as they lurched onward behind horses caparisoned with almost barbaric splendor, the creaking of harness and their swaying tops conveyed to the beholder a sense of power. They told of an advance that would know no retrogression. They were the frigates of the land. A description of such famous and distinctively American vehicles at the height of their popularity and usefulness,[2] as set forth by an authority on the subject, is given in the following passage:[3]

"The capacious wagons which the Conestoga farmers then had in use," said the narrator, "were the best means of land transportation which the times and circumstances of the country then afforded. These wagons and teams attracted attention and commanded admiration wherever they appeared; and hence the origin, as I conceive, of the horse and wagon to which the appellation of 'Conestoga' has been attached. . . . The harness was constructed of the best materials, with an eye to show as well as utility. In the harness and trimmings of these teams the owners frequently indulged in expenses that approached to extravagance. . . . It was, indeed, an animating sight to see five or six highly fed horses, half covered with heavy bear skins, or decorated with gaudily fringed housings, surmounted with a set of finely toned bells, their bridles adorned with loops of red trimming . . . as if half conscious of their superior appearance, and participating in the pride that swelled the bosom of their master."

In the course of time tens of thousands of Conestoga

[1] The gaudy painting of the Conestoga wagon was another manifestation of the tendency of the time toward bright color and vivid decoration.

[2] About 1800 to 1815.

[3] The quotation is from John Strohm's account in the United States Agricultural Report for 1863: p. 178.

wagons[1] rumbled over all the main roads of the country, serving the emigrant, the traveller whose time did not demand the express speed of a stage-coach, and conveying a large part of the freight that moved between cities not connected by water. The driver of a Conestoga rode on a wheel horse, and he and those with him carried their own bedding, which they spread out on the floor of the public room in the tavern where they halted for the night.

The slow progress that the country was making in its use of private travel vehicles during the early years of periodic transportation is illustrated by the fact that in the year 1761 there were but thirty-eight wheeled conveyances in Philadelphia. Their several types and numbers were: three coaches, fifteen chaises, eighteen chariots and two landaus. By 1772 the people of the town owned eighty-four vehicles, and in 1794 they had eight hundred and twenty-seven. There were twenty-two privately owned wheeled vehicles in Boston in 1768, and 145 like equipages in 1798. Similar figures for other communities do not appear, but the advancement of various important cities in the respect indicated was doubtless substantially parallel with the cases cited.

Throughout the eighteenth century, as well as in the seventeenth, the winter season continued to be a favorite time for travel. The scarcity of wheeled wagons of various sorts was not reflected in the use and popularity of sleds. Every family had one or more of them, and the discomforts due to cold weather and biting gales were much preferred to the troubles that attended a journey at any other time. In thickly settled parts of the country, during the frost months, a wayfarer in a sleigh was rarely

[1] Those that travelled between the East and Pittsburgh were often called "Pitt Teams," though they were identical with the Conestoga.

out of sight of equipages similar to his own. Many hundred horse-drawn sleds were to be seen in the streets of any town on a clear winter day,[1] and long-extended travel was undertaken in them.[2] A large proportion of the snow craft were home-made, box-like affairs, but like everything else of the period to which paint would cling they were highly seasoned with all the essences of the rainbow.

[1] Henry's "History of the Lehigh Valley" (Pa.) says five hundred sleds were either standing in the streets of Easton or passing through them at one time.

[2] Daniel Webster sometimes went between his New Hampshire home and Boston in a sleigh.

CHAPTER XIII

EARLY TAVERNS — THEIR RELATION TO TRAVEL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS — RATES FIXED BY LAW — CONSTABLES WATCHED TRAVELLERS CLOSELY — HOW THE SLEEPING PROBLEM WAS SOMETIMES SOLVED — A TAVERN DINNER TABLE EQUIPPED TO SATISFY HUNGER RATHER THAN FOR ARTISTIC DISPLAY — LAWS REGULATING RETAIL CHARGES FOR FOOD — UNIVERSAL HOSPITALITY OF THE SOUTH — FIRST TRAVEL TO INTERIOR NEW YORK — EFFECT OF THE REVOLUTION ON THE MENTAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

THERE was one feature of primitive travel in America which, though not in itself a method of locomotion, was nevertheless so intimately related to the movements of travellers and to all public affairs as to require attention in a study of early conditions. That phase of the subject was the little tavern, or inn, destined at last to develop into a palace beneath whose roof the exacting demands of a thousand guests are supplied by an army of servants. The evolution of the public house has kept pace for nearly three hundred years with the changing system whereby the pilgrim has reached its doors, and in size, methods and conveniences it has consistently reflected the manner in which the traveller has pursued his actual journey.

By the middle of the eighteenth century the tavern had reached a position of consequence in the national life,

and from that period until about the year 1830 its importance steadily increased both as a factor in the affairs of the people and as an essential element to be considered in the making of any journey. Conditions coming into being at that time gradually altered the status of the tavern in its relation to the public, and afterward, though increasing in bulk and magnificence, the inn lost much of its former influence. It has now come to be taken as a matter-of-fact incident; as an institution whose chief characteristics can be anticipated and depended on by those who have need of it. The modern hotel has been standardized and reduced to an automatic machine of entertainment. This was not true in the early times, for then the inn possessed nothing of system but revealed, instead, the character of its proprietor. If the host possessed a marked individuality, either congenial or unpleasant, so also did his hostelry. To-day there is no host, in the old sense; only a staff of trained experts in each of a dozen departments, who by invisible methods minister to the population that drifts through a maze of endless corridors and lofty halls. The early tavern has become a big department store for the sale of sleep, food and drink.

Public inns came into existence almost as soon as the English speaking race secured a permanent foothold in the northern colonies. The earliest known establishment of the kind was licensed by the General Court of Massachusetts in 1634,[1] and from that time they multiplied amazingly. By the year 1675 Cotton Mather declared that every other house in Boston was a tavern, though his assertion was of course an exaggeration. He objected to the smoking and drinking that prevailed in the houses of public entertainment.

[1] Drake's "Old Boston Taverns": p. 19.

All places of the sort were from the first regulated by strict laws passed for the purpose. Even the prices they might charge were named by the authorities. In 1634 the cost of a meal at a Boston inn was fixed at sixpence, and the Court declared that a patron must pay no more than one penny for a quart of beer.[1] Should an innkeeper demand more than the legal rate for food and drink he

55.—Fraunce's Tavern, a popular pre-Revolutionary inn of New York City. In the assembly room, occupying the second story, Washington took farewell of his generals. The building still remains. This and the following eight illustrations suggest the accommodations available to early travellers in the East.

was to be arrested and fined. Another Massachusetts law also provided that no private individual might take a stranger into his home without giving surety for the good conduct of the newcomer. The particular statute in ques-

[1] Similar regulations passed by the New York Common Council in 1675 fixed the price of tavern lodging at threepence, and the charge for a meal at eightpence.
A usual price for tavern accommodations throughout the colonies from 1700 until about the time of the Revolution was three shillings a day. For this sum the traveller got his lodgings, a fire, if necessary, three meals and beer between-times.

tion was passed in order that all travellers might be forced to sojourn at public taverns, where their actions could be kept more easily under the close gaze of town officials. A bailiff always watched the guests of an ordinary,[1] and if a stranger behaved in a way considered by the representative of the law to be unseemly, he was admonished. The constable even regulated the amount of liquor which the traveller might consume. If he thought the guest was passing proper bounds he would appear at the stranger's elbow and carefully pour out the libation himself.

Drinking, however, was not frowned upon.[2] Ale, beer and spiced cider were the principal potions, and almost every one consumed those beverages in quantities. A landlord was subject to penalty if he did not permit his guest to drink all that could legally be consumed on the premises, provided the man appeared able to take the amount without unpleasant consequences, and the bailiff had no objection. Excessive drinking was prevented or penalized by methods common to all times and countries, and by a few expedients peculiar to America only.[3]

Vastly different was the attitude of the authorities toward the use of tobacco, either in taverns or anywhere else. According to early New England laws smoking in public was an offense of grave character, and was forbidden.[4] One of the first Massachusetts pronouncements against smoking in taverns read: "Nor shall any take

[1] A public house was also called an ordinary.

[2] It was even customary for the people to drink as a part of the celebration attending the building of a church or the ordination of a clergyman.

[3] According to a law of 1676, whenever an Indian was found drunk in New York the tavern keeper responsible for his condition was fined. But if it could not be discovered in what house he drank his liquor, then every white man on the whole street was subject to fine.

[4] "Men are now living who have been asked to plead 'guilty' or 'not guilty' at the bar of a police court for smoking in the streets of Boston."—Drake's "Old Boston Taverns," p. 16.

56.—The Notch House, a noted tavern of the White Mountains, in New Hampshire. Typical of the great early hostelries of New England country regions. The washing pump is at the corner of the building and the dinner bell is mounted on the roof.

tobacco in any wine or common victual house, except in a private room there, so as the master of said house nor any guest there shall take offense thereat; which, if any do, then such person shall forbear upon pain of two shillings sixpence for every such offense." Nevertheless the men of New England continued to smoke with ever increasing vigor, and in the course of about a hundred and sixty years the legal warfare against tobacco was abandoned in the North.[1]

All early American inns for the accommodation of wayfarers were copied, in their usages and character, from the English institution of like nature, and, as in the parent country, they gradually became the chief centers of the life and news of the communities in which they were situated. They were also the most prominent landmarks of any journey, and it thus became the universal custom for travellers and business men to compute all distances from them, instead of from one town to another. In those days of few newspapers and fewer mails the arrival at a tavern of two or three strangers from some distant city was an event of real importance to the inhabitants. No sooner did the news of their presence get abroad than many of the principal men of the place gathered at the hostelry to welcome the pilgrims, ask questions of them, and listen to the tales they had brought from the outside world. Chiefly in that way did the doings of other regions sift through many parts of the country. From those gatherings at the taverns grew local clubs and societies that often took organized action in relation to business affairs, and eventually became the first

[1] Drake says that on one occasion, late in the eighteenth century, two travelling Dutchmen from New York who were walking about Boston in search for lodgings wandered into Harvard College by mistake. On getting inside they found the tobacco smoke so thick that one of them said, "This is certain a tavern." "Old Boston Taverns," p. 15.

A NEW-HAMPSHIRE TAVERN.

SOME years ago, his Rozinante striding
A gentleman was in New-Hampshire riding,
Far to the north—He'd travelled many a league,
One day; and now with hunger, thirst, fatigue,
Almost o'ercome, with most rejoicing eyes
A tavern sign he at a distance spies:
Approaching, on the sign these words appear:
"For man & beast best entertainment here."
Dismounting for the hostler now he calls,
But for the hostler all in vain he balls,
He opes the door: that sees with graces winning,
The landlady and daughter Bets a spinning
Humming away at most enormous rate,
This on the little wheel, that on the great,
'Where is the landlord?'—'He is gone away
Clear down the lot with Joe, a mowing *hay*'
Grass, madam—have you oats?—'No, none at all
My husband sold the whole last fall
To find the house in liquors'—Corn, ma'am pray?'
'The last half bushel went to mill to day'
'Then you have meal?'—'Not any; you know, Bets,
All we've not baked has gone to pay our debts.
Let down them bars; take out your bits, your horse
Will find as good feed, sir, as ever worz, (*was.*)
—This done, the trav'ller to the house returned,
And to allay his thirst impatient burned.
'I'll thank you madam, for a glass of gin
And water'—'Sir, there's not a drop within'
'Some brandy, then.'—'Sir, we have none at all;
For here, for brandy people never call.'
'A glass then of West India.'—'sir we've none,'
'Well then New England.'—All our rum is gone.'
'Have you some cider, or some beer that's good!'
'Our cider's out—we have not lately brewed.'
'I'm very thirsty; pray some water bring'—
'Bets take the gourd, and fetch some from the spring.'
Bets went—returned—'Mother, th' old sow, oh lud,
Has made the water all as thick as mud,
By wall'wing in the spring.'—The trav'ller now
Demands; 'What keep you but yourselves and sow?'
'Keep,' says the woman, feeling anger's spur
'What do we keep? why we—*keep Tavern, Sir.*'

57.—A poem written by a traveller describing accommodations found by him at a New Hampshire inn of less excellence. Published by A. Allen, of Hartford, in his "New England Almanack for 1821."

merchants' exchanges and chambers of commerce in America. Many of the early merchants' exchanges, in fact, held their regular meetings in taverns, and in some instances the courts and legislatures did likewise. Whenever a mass meeting was to be held the public was directed to assemble in front of, or within, some prominent hostelry. Legal notices and governmental proclamations were fastened to the fronts of inns, and political caucuses assembled in those establishments,[1] where the leaders of public opinion always took up their headquarters during a time of unrest. Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence in a tavern[2] and discussed it there with his fellow revolutionists.

The main feature of any early tavern was a large public assembly room containing chairs and tables and with an immense open fireplace on one side. Opening from this apartment was the dining-room, and beyond it, the kitchen. The guest rooms were usually above. The stock of liquors was kept in barrels, jugs and bottles in the public room, behind a partition or counter. For nearly a century and a half the tavern stables contained no provision for the accommodation of vehicles. Only travellers on horseback or on foot were expected, and many of these carried their own blankets on their backs. When a wayfarer came to an inn and found the beds all in use his serenity of mind was quite undisturbed. The landlord considered it to be his duty to give shelter to all who opened his door, and did so. After the normal capacity

[1] During the political agitation that preceded the Revolution the "Green Dragon," in Boston, was the headquarters of the Whig, or American party. There Hancock, the Adamses, Warren, Revere, Putnam and others gathered to discuss the troubles of the colonies.

In the "Bunch of Grapes," another Boston inn, the Ohio Company was organized by Rufus Putnam and his friends, and in that way the tavern played a part in the movement toward the West that eventually led to the permanent settlement of Ohio.

Franklin and his cronies gathered nightly in the "Indian King" tavern of Philadelphia, to discuss public affairs.

[2] The "Indian Queen," in Philadelphia, where he was lodging at the time.

58.—The Raleigh Tavern. A southern inn of the best sort during the last half of the eighteenth century.

of the tavern was exhausted any additional arrivals were informed of the fact and knew what to do without further comment. At bed time they simply spread their blankets on the floor of the public room, lay down with their feet toward the fire and rolled themselves up like a row of human cocoons. Often the assembly room was so crowded with the forms of weary men that a very late comer had to explore by candle-light and careful steps in order to find space for himself. In the morning the guests unrolled, and arose full clad for another day upon the road. They made their ablutions, amid fearful splutterings, at the watering trough or a wooden tub outside, and passed the towel around with courtesy.

Then came the breakfast ceremonial. The host marched to the front door, lifted a cow's horn to his lips and sent forth the resounding blast that summoned all

hands to the table. Some landlords preferred a big bell rather than a horn, and filled the air with a clangor heard for a mile around. A meal at one of the early taverns was nearly always a bountiful repast, and usually ended, whether at breakfast, dinner or supper, with two or more kinds of pie. Everything was put on the big table at once, and everybody ate until he reluctantly made up his mind to stop. In those days a meal meant all a man wanted to eat. The price remained the same. A slice of bread was visible even when the edge of it was held toward the eye, the butter could be safely attributed to the cow, and a third cup of tea or glass of milk was as smilingly produced, if called for, as was the first. In short, the deplorable deficiency in varieties of knives and forks, and in different species of spoons — as measured by modern requirements — was made up by a plentitude of things that could be eaten instead of looked at. The tavern dinner-table of early days, when fully equipped for active service, was primarily designed for satisfying hunger rather than to tickle the eye of the gastronomical critic who would shudder to behold a slice of ham lifted to its doom on a sausage knife. The fundamental idea of the diner was to convey the food from the table to his teeth; the precise method of its conveyance thither being a matter of subsidiary concern. In his main purpose he was successful, and if the methods by which bread and meat are transported to their final destination have also improved with the lapse of years, it is well to remember that those earlier generations were sturdy men who fearlessly met whatever emergency confronted them, whether the problem was the conquest of the wilderness or the impalement of a distant potato.

Such were the essential features of the average early tavern of the frontier and its accommodations of bed and

board. City establishments were much more pretentious.[1] Of course there were all sorts of public houses. A few were poor establishments; many were excellent indeed. A French traveller[2] who had large opportunity to judge American inns of the late eighteenth century said of them, as a class: "You meet with neatness, dignity and decency; the chambers neat, the beds good, the sheets clean, supper passable; cyder, tea, punch and all for fourteen pence a head."[3] John Adams was commenting on an inn of high quality when he wrote: "Oated and drank tea[4] at Pease's — a smart house and landlord truly; well dressed with his ruffles, etc., and upon inquiry I found he was the great man of the town, their representative as well as tavern keeper."

A careful comparison between early ordinaries and the later establishments which had just begun to lose their old influence and take on the character of modern hotels has been left in the writings of an observant American scholar[5] who was familiar with national conditions throughout a long period. "The best old-fashioned New England inns," he averred, "were superior to any of the modern ones. There was less bustle, less parade, less appearance of doing a great deal to gratify your wishes, than at the reputable modern inns;[6] but much more was actually done, and there was greater comfort and enjoyment. In a word, you found in these inns the pleasures of an excellent private house. If you were sick, you were nursed and befriended as in your own family. To finish

[1] One of the greatest of the early taverns was the "Indian Queen" in Baltimore, which had no less than two hundred bed-chambers. Similarly large houses were to be found, by Revolutionary times, in Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

[2] Brissot de Warville.

[3] The price he names is too low to represent the average charge for equal entertainment.

[4] Meaning that the horse "oated" and he drank tea. Pease was the Yankee who also carried on so many stage-coach lines.

[5] Timothy Dwight.

[6] Those of about 1825.

the story, your bills were always equitable, calculated on what you ought to pay, and not upon the scheme of getting the most which extortion might think proper to demand."

One big basis of the small charges made by early taverns for the accommodations they offered was to be found in the prices of food during those times. Govern-

59.—A very large inn, with travellers arriving and departing. The vehicles are a two-horse private coach, a small two-horse stage-coach of oval lines, and three examples of the one-horse chaise.

mental regulation of commercial affairs—and even of retail trade and small transactions to which the ultimate consumer was a party—was a familiar feature of the period in some colonies, and no little care was taken that the people were not unduly charged for their foodstuffs. The business of supplying the public with those commodities commonly called necessities of life was not

then the complex and artificially mysterious process it has since become. Neither the products of the soil nor essential manufactured articles were passed through many hands by a commercial mechanism devised for the purpose, and at constantly increasing valuations, before reaching the individuals who had actual use for them. The amount of money needed to produce a unit quantity of any ordinary kind of food and place it before the consumer in the market-place was a matter of common notoriety, or easily ascertainable if desired, and the legal prices of such commodities were based on that knowledge. Articles of food and other things requiring systematic labor for their production were cheap because they normally passed directly from the producer to the consumer, without the intervention of those devious commercial devices that have been, in part, brought into being by later structural changes in human society.

As an example of the retail value of foodstuffs in the second half of the eighteenth century, the lawful prices of certain commodities in the New York City markets in the year 1763 may be cited. They were:[1]

A hen turkey, two shillings and sixpence; a teal duck, sixpence; a quail, one and one-half penny; a wild goose, two shillings; a snipe, one penny; sea bass, two pence a pound; butter, ninepence per pound; lobsters, sixpence per pound; clams, ninepence a hundred; oysters, two shillings per bushel.

These were mostly luxuries. The prices of domestic meats and ordinary vegetables and fruits were in no especial need of regulation, for their values were too well known and trivial. Of some such things the consumer

[1] Watson's "Olden Time Researches and Remembrances of New York City." Phila., 1830. Contained in the first edition of the "Annals of Philadelphia."

could get all he required for whatever he wanted to pay. The vendor of them at times acted as if ashamed to take his customer's money, and added an extra peck or so to a bushel of vegetables as an apology for making a commercial transaction out of it. Thus, if the guest at a tavern was protected by law from overcharge, so also was the tavern keeper himself safeguarded in his purchases of provender that his own efforts did not produce.

The traveller in the South, in his search for food and shelter, encountered experiences radically different from those that came to him along the busier highways of the northern and central colonies. Very few taverns of any sort were to be found in southern regions until some time after the Revolution, and those that did exist were in Charleston, Richmond and two or three others of the infrequent towns. The man who found it necessary to make any extensive journey in the South could never expect to obtain provision for his needs at a public house established for the purpose. Yet in spite of such an apparent obstacle to endurable travel, the pilgrim in that part of the country found a reception even more cordial, and comforts often more elaborate, than those which greeted him in New England or the middle commonwealths.

From earliest times the people of the South displayed a personal hospitality to strangers unusual in its sincerity and universality, which has continued without interruption as a tradition and an existent reality. Massachusetts colony, as has been seen, had a law framed to make it difficult for a private person to entertain a traveller beneath his roof. Virginia, on the contrary, declared by an act of government that unless a wanderer within her boundaries himself stipulated that he was to pay for his entertainment no charge should fall upon him, no matter

Scene on the Susquehannah.

60.—An incident of pedestrian travel. Indicating the manner in which packs of food, blankets or other necessities were carried between taverns. Two of the men wear bootees, and the costumes of all indicate wealth. The reptile is exaggerated. A rattlesnake nine feet long was a monster.

how long he remained, or where. There were almost no southern inns in the commercial sense, but every habitation, of whatsoever degree, was a sure refuge for the wayfarer at any time of night or day. So it was from the first. An early traveller in the region drew this picture of the extent to which the people of the South made it their duty to entertain the sojourner among them:

"The inhabitants," he said, "are very courteous to travellers, who need no other recommendation than being human creatures. A stranger has no more to do but to inquire upon the road where any gentleman or good housekeeper lives, and then he may depend upon being received with hospitality. This good-nature is so general among their people that the gentry, when they go abroad, order their principal servants to entertain all visitors with everything the plantation affords; and the poor planters who have but one bed will often sit up, or lie upon a form, or couch all night, to make room for a weary traveller to repose himself after his journey."[1]

The southern planters went even further than Berkeley said, for in the era when there were no public houses in that part of the country, planters along the most frequented roads sometimes kept slaves beside the highway whose duty it was to invite travellers to stop for the night and receive, as guests, whatever entertainment they required. The cabin dwellers of the South pursued the same policy, and few worse affronts could be given either to them or to the wealthier planters than to offer money in exchange for the hospitality they so freely extended.

But one other phase of travel movement remains to be mentioned as a salient feature of the conditions that existed until after the Revolution. It was the attention given to the Susquehanna River region of New York and Pennsylvania, and the first efforts made to reach and populate that part of the country. The struggle of the people of New England, New Jersey, eastern New York and

[1] Berkeley's "History of Virginia."

lower Pennsylvania to penetrate to the valley of the Susquehanna and establish themselves there, during the forty years from 1735 onward, emphasizes the trivial impression that had been made on the northern wilderness up to that time and illustrates the diversity of transportation methods which then prevailed. It has already been seen that the era was one in which desire for expansion and improvement first became apparent in any degree, and wherein, for the first time, striking contrasts in travel facilities were visible. Pedestrians and horsemen filled the roads between towns in more thickly settled regions; canoes and pole-boats were busy on the little coastal rivers of the North; long pack-trains wound through the Pennsylvania mountains; Conestoga wagons lumbered slowly across the country, and the feats of the newly established periodic *Flying Machine* made many believe that the millennium of locomotion was swiftly approaching. Progress was indeed a visible reality, but it was almost altogether confined to a few important highways and the neighborhood of half a dozen important cities. If the traveller in any part of the country left the beaten track, even but for a few miles, he found himself amid that "most howling wilderness" which appalled the earliest immigrants and presented such formidable obstacles to any advance through it. Those primeval barriers to progress were the ones encountered by men who fought their way toward the Susquehanna during the very years that the stage wagon and first stage-coaches were coming into use but a short distance away.

The importance of the Susquehanna River and valley as a travel route was recognized at an early time,[1] even

[1] That is to say, the route was an important one to a people who had no means of transport but small boats and horses.

when the geography of the region was but vaguely known. Perhaps the first prominent reference to it as a possible highway for white men was that made by Cadwallader Colden, in 1737, when he said that "goods may be carried[1] from this lake [Lake Otsego, in New York] in battoes or flat-bottomed vessels through Pennsylvania to Maryland and Virginia and . . . by either of these branches goods may be carried to the mountains, and I am told that the passage through the mountains to branches of the Mississippi (which issue on the west side of these mountains[2]) is neither long nor difficult, by which means inland navigation may be had to the Bay of Mexico."

The first general manifestation of public interest in the Susquehanna country became visible in New England about 1750, and was in part due to stories descriptive of the district brought back by missionaries who had penetrated into the western forest to convert the Indians.[3] These tales were spread through Connecticut and Massachusetts by word of mouth and the newspapers. A few adventurous spirits soon organized the regular little travel caravans and set forth to grope through the woods and establish new homes in the far-off land, two hundred miles away, that was known to them only by hearsay. They put their women on horses, loaded other animals with bedding and household goods, tied the babies in maple-syrup troughs for safe keeping, picked up their rifles, whistled to the dogs, and started.

Their way led them over the country to the Hudson River, which they crossed near the present town of Catskill. As the result of these first migrations a trail that

[1] On the Susquehanna.

[2] Colden, as well as other public men, knew of the head waters of the Ohio and dimly saw their possible future utility as an aid to progress through the interior.

[3] Elihu Spencer and John Sergeant were two of the missionaries whose narratives aided in producing this result.

THE

DOMESTIC MANNERS

OF THE

AMERICANS;

CHARACTERISTIC SKETCHES OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY RECENT TRAVELLERS.

GLASGOW:
PUBLISHED BY RICHARD GRIFFIN & CO.

MDCCCXXXVI.

61.—Rough travellers carousing around the huge fireplace in the assembly room of a large tavern at night. The floor is made either of puncheons or slabs of flat stone. The liquor bar is shown.

promptly developed into a well-marked tote-road, and afterward into a highway fit for vehicles,[1] soon led from the settled districts of New England to the Hudson. Once that stream was passed the journey through the forest[2] became a more difficult one. The route still to be traversed before the upper waters of the Susquehanna were reached was a hundred miles long in a westwardly direction, and at first there was no serviceable path to be followed. The ground was a jumble of obstacles through which a caravan had to pick its way with infinite labor, at the rate of a few miles a day. One man who went over the trail in 1753[3] left a record of his experiences in the wilderness west of the Hudson in which he said the road was "obstructed by fallen trees, old logs, miry places, pointed rock and entangling roots. How bad the travelling is we cannot tell." The male members of the caravans made beds of pine boughs at night for their wives and babies, and themselves rolled up in blankets on the ground, where they got such sleep as the panthers and wolves permitted to them. On arriving at the Susquehanna the men of each pack-train built canoes in which to transport the goods, women and children of the party southward to a favorable location, and a few members led the tired horses overland along the banks of the river. When all had at last reunited and chosen a site for future homes they built log cabins and took up again the daily duties of their lives.

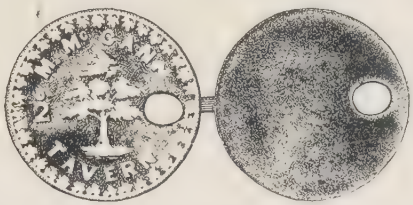
The other way of reaching the headwaters of the Sus-

[1] The road through Connecticut to the Hudson was made into a turnpike about the year 1800, and a flood of travel in Conestoga wagons and other vehicles then moved over it toward the new settlements in interior New York and northern Pennsylvania. Wagons, however, had reached the Hudson over the trail some time before it became a turnpike. A later reference will be made to the movement toward the Susquehanna as it developed after the Revolution.

[2] In 1871 a traveller between the Hudson and the Susquehanna measured a birch tree 26 feet in circumference.

[3] Gideon Hawley, who travelled from Massachusetts to the Susquehanna in that year.

quehanna was by means of big canoes, usually of the hollow log variety, that were propelled up the river by means of poles. Many of the people who first travelled into northern Pennsylvania and central New York from southern Pennsylvania and the Delaware Bay region in the second half of the eighteenth century made the trip in that manner. When laden with the members of his family and his worldly possessions, a man's canoe often weighed



62.—McCann's two-penny piece. A specimen of the metallic money issued by a few early American tavern keepers. Such pieces are among the uncommon examples of American coinage. Brass. Actual size. Revolutionary period. The punched hole, which corresponds to that made in some issues of early metallic stage-coach and railway tickets, suggests that tavern money was occasionally strung on wire, for convenience. See illustration No. 159.

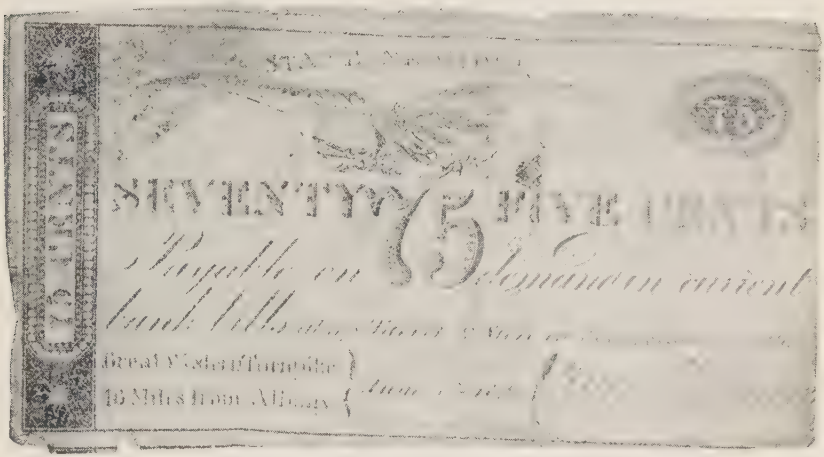
a ton. In seasons of low water all the men and women got out, waded in the stream and pushed their craft along until another navigable stretch of the river was reached. Thus they journeyed, never at the rate of more than twenty-five miles a day and usually at about half that speed, until they gained their destination. Two or three weeks of hard work were required, under favorable conditions, to reach the interior of New York from either New England or the mouth of the Susquehanna.

Such were the methods by which the first travel of white people into upper Pennsylvania and central and southern New York was undertaken. The men who did such extraordinary things looked upon their experiences

in a matter-of-fact way because they had no conception of other devices for human locomotion. They gave all their ingenuity to the problem of transporting themselves from place to place, and thought they succeeded admirably well. According to their notion the obvious troubles and discomforts were altogether due to natural conditions that would never be greatly different, and were in no degree due to the crudity of their own appliances, which, in their opinion, were nearly as good as could be fashioned.

All progress thus far made in land travel had been the result of patient effort, persistence and adaptability along one clearly defined but narrow line of development. No other element had entered into the attempted solution of the problem. There was manifest, as indicated, a certain quality of impatience that had brought about greater speed on highways, and which, when fully awakened, was to alter the face of the world and the affairs of humanity, but it was not an impatience born of knowledge that better things exist yet are unavailable for immediate use. Every small forward step in advance for a century and a half in using land and water vehicles — boats had hardly altered at all — had been due, either directly or indirectly, to physical labor either by man or beast, or both. Of those near impending miracles born of the brain and not of the hands, without which the task of continental conquest might not have been accomplished in a thousand years, there was no trace; no hint. The time was but lately passed when an exhibition of such things would have resulted in the execution of their originator as the master of infernal powers whose possession made him a danger to his fellow men. Then came the years of the Revolution as a climax to the incessant economic struggle, social disorder, political unrest and turmoil of warfare that had pre-

vailed during all the history of the new civilization which was fighting for dominance on the edge of the continent. The close of the Revolution and the attainment of independence found the people of the new-born states in a curious condition of mind. In their consideration of, and attention to, the small affairs of their daily lives they behaved in a normal way, for the thought and action nec-



63.—Sample of the paper money issued by tavern keepers for the convenience of travellers and the neighboring population. Small silver was often scarce, and tavern money, in sums under one dollar, took its place. If the reputation of the inn-keeper was good, then the money was good. The paper was frequently printed from engraved plates, as in this case, as a precaution against counterfeiting.

essary to the carrying on of such matters was largely automatic. At least it did not require any departure from familiar precedent, any violent effort to adopt new customs and admit that former methods, as well as former years, were dead.

But apart from their daily routine the attention of the population was given to a consideration of political affairs and to the utterance, by voice or pen, of all the thoughts upon those subjects that germinated within their

minds. There was a cyclone of discussion, a tumult of debate that was hushed only by the ocean on one side and the wilderness on the other. Let it be said, however, that in this strange period — as in all others of like nature in history — there were a few men whose thoughts were largely given to questions of material development and who tried hard, although in vain, to attract the attention of their brethren.

These conditions were not surprising when considered in connection with what had preceded them. They were, rather, natural and inevitable, and now require to be mentioned because of a phenomenon in which they were soon to result. For many years all that was strongest in the intellect of the colonies had been concentrated, with an intensity hard to exaggerate, on political affairs. For an equal time the people had lived a national life in which warfare and politics had been almost the only elements. The leaders of public thought and action had ceaselessly appealed to the country in utterances dealing with those things, and the mass of the people had done nothing but listen to the appeals, argue about them and fight in response to them.

And at last the end of the long tumult had come; the abstract political condition so long desired and struggled for had been gained. But the country could not at once put aside all memory of the period just ended, and turn with calm and unclouded thought to the more prosaic but equally important questions of domestic affairs and continental progress. Indeed, it is probable that such things were even further from the public mind immediately after the Revolution than before or during the struggle, since nations — like individuals — have youth, strength and senility, and their inhabitants collectively manifest in

those periods many of the characteristics of the individual man. It was a very young, though vigorous and boisterous nation that had been born of the Revolution. It was old enough to realize its own existence, and was much interested in itself and its surroundings, but did not yet feel equal to the task of walking very far in any one direction. The colonies, though they had won their freedom, did not yet know what to do with it. Absorbed in a contemplation of past perils from which they had so recently emerged, the freemen suddenly found that independence, in itself, was not a complete solution of the problem created by their ambition. No sooner was the fighting ended than the chief figures of the land fell into another violent discussion over the next step to be taken, and the populace forthwith took sides and added to the clamor. During the years from 1783 to 1789 the country was a continuous political caucus, and no broad subject that did not in some way relate to state rights, Federal jurisdiction, term of office, taxation, the franchise, or such things, had much chance of winning the public ear. Even the significance that lay in the extension of the national territory to the Mississippi River failed to receive general attention. There was no way to get there. The national horizon, in the eyes of the mass of the people, still remained about two hundred miles wide from east to west.

CHAPTER XIV

JOHN FITCH CONCEIVES THE PLAN OF APPLYING STEAM TO THE PURPOSES OF TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION — HIS EARLY METHODS AND MODELS — THE IDEA PLACED BEFORE MANY LEGISLATURES AND PUBLIC MEN — NO ONE GRASPS ITS VALUE — HE SECURES RECOGNITION AND MONOPOLISTIC PRIVILEGES — JEERS GREET THE FIRST BOAT MOVED BY STEAM IN AMERICA — PERSISTENCE OF THE INVENTOR

IT was amid these conditions, in the year 1785, that a man named John Fitch, born in Connecticut but then living in Philadelphia, came forward with a plan for revolutionizing the social and business affairs of mankind by applying steam to the purposes of travel and transportation. He proposed to run boats on the Delaware River by means of steam power, and proceeded to do it, while the baby-among-nations looked on.

The complete record of Fitch's life and work is available,[1] and it is therefore only necessary, in these pages, to preface the narrative of his invention of the steamboat in America by saying that he was a gunsmith during the

[1] Whittelsey's "Sketch of the Life of John Fitch": Spark's "Amer. Biog.," Vol. VI.
Westcott's "Life of John Fitch":
Howe's "Historical Collections of Connecticut":
"Ohio Archæological and Historical Publications," Vol. VIII.
Lloyd's "Steamboat Directory":
O'Callahan's "Documentary History of New York":
Preble's "History of Steam Navigation":
Thornton's "Short Account of the Origin of Steamboats":
Watson's "Annals of Philadelphia":
U. S. Patent Office Report for 1850, Part I.
"New York Magazine," 1790; etc., etc., etc.

Revolution, a worker in metal, a maker and repairer of clocks and watches, and an explorer, map maker, surveyor and captive of the Indians in the western wilderness. Because of unhappy domestic relations he had left his family some sixteen years before the date mentioned, after long consideration of the consequences of that step on himself and his reputation. And in later years, when putting into words the manuscript record of his undertakings that was entrusted to the Philadelphia Library, to be opened thirty years after its deposit in that institution, he said: "I know of nothing so perplexing and vexatious to a man of feelings as a turbulant Wife and Steamboat building. I experienced the former, and quit in season, and had I been in my right sences, I should undoubtedly have treated the latter in the same manner."

Fitch's scanty education, of which proof is seen in the passage quoted, will be understood when it is said that his father, a close-fisted man, compelled him to quit his intermittent schooling at the age of ten despite the boy's protest. After that calamity he worked for himself during the hours in which his parent did not demand his services, raised a crop of potatoes which he sold for ten shillings, and bought a geography. He would have realized more from his labor had not his father demanded of him a quantity of the produce equal to that originally given to him to plant. The incident is an illustration of the qualities which later impelled the man to persevere, in the face of obstacles and derision, until he had turned his vision of a steamboat into a reality.

The idea of a steamboat came to him in the spring of 1785, and by August his first rough model was completed. On the 20th of that month, Doctor Ewing, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to William

Houston, a former member of Congress, in which he said: "I have examined Mr. Fitch's machine for rowing a boat. . . . It is certain that the extensive force of water, when converted into steam, is equal to any obstruction that can be laid in its way . . . and the application of this force to turn a wheel in the water, so as to answer the purpose of oars, seems easy and natural by the machine which he proposes, and of which he has shown me a rough model. . ." With this as a basis Fitch started for New York City in an effort to interest Congress in his invention. He stopped on the way at Trenton, where Houston wrote a similar letter, and at Princeton, where Provost Smith of Princeton College gave him a third. Reaching the national capital, the inventor wrote a letter to Congress which read as follows:

"August 29, 1785.

"Sir:

"The subscriber begs leave to lay at the feet of Congress, an attempt he has made to facilitate the internal Navigation of the United States, adapted especially to the Waters of the Mississippi. The machine he has invented for the purpose, has been examined by several Gentlemen of Learning and Ingenuity, who have given it their approbation. Being thus encouraged, he is desirous to solicit the attention of Congress, to a rough model of it now with him, that, after examination into the principles upon which it operates, they may be enabled to judge whether it deserves encouragement. And he, as in duty bound, shall ever pray.

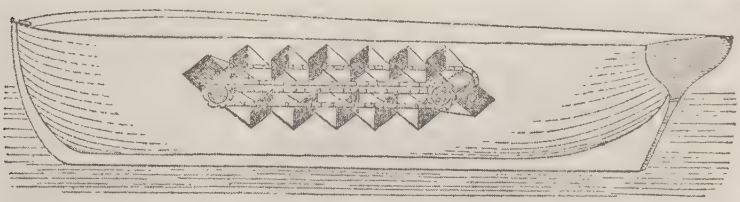
"John Fitch.

"His Excellency, The President of Congress."

This letter was referred to a committee of three members, who made no report as far as the records show. The minutes of Congress, at that time, contained no reference to any but matters considered to be of importance. Fitch's invention did not fall within that category. He returned to Pennsylvania filled with anger at the treatment he had received, and thereafter referred to the committee of Congress as "ignorant boys." But before departing from New

York he had approached the Spanish Minister with his boat. The diplomat was much interested, and desired that the invention should be the exclusive property of his master, the King of Spain. To this Fitch would not consent.

Fitch's first model is described by Provost Ewing of the University of Pennsylvania as having a wheel that turned in the water. The best description of it is by



John Fitch's model of Sept., 1785, with endless chain and floats and paddle-boards, in possession of the American Philosophical Society.

64.—John Fitch conceives the idea that steam might be applied to the purposes of transportation, and invents a steamboat. His first steam-propelled craft, in 1785, was a skiff moved by little paddles (shown in black in the illustration) which were attached to an endless chain. The illustrations to No. 72, inclusive, also relate to Fitch's work.

Daniel Longstreth,[1] who says: "It was in this log shop [owned by Cobe Scout, a wheelwright of Bucks county, Pa.] that Fitch made his model steamboat, with paddle-wheels as they are now used. The model was tried on a small stream on Joseph Longstreth's meadow, about half a mile from Davisville, in Southampton township, and it realized every expectation. The machinery was made of brass, with the exception of the paddle-wheels, which were made of wood by Nathaniel B. Boileau,[2] whilst on a visit during vacation from Princeton College."

[1] The "D. L." of Watson's "Annals." Daniel Longstreth's father was an associate of Fitch while the inventor lived in Pennsylvania.

[2] Afterward Secretary of State of Pennsylvania.

Other accounts relating to Fitch's preliminary ideas are given by Doctor William Thornton, a member of Fitch's company, by Henry Voigt, also a member of the company and the inventor's principal assistant, and by Oliver Evans, an early engineer of America who himself built and ran a steamboat at Philadelphia in 1804. Probably because the wheels were too heavy for such a small model and weak engine they were almost at once discarded. On this point Whittlesey says: "The buckets of the wheels were found to labor too much in the water, entering, as they did, at a considerable angle, and departing at the same. They lost power by striking at the surface and afterwards lifting themselves out of water. This led to the substitution of oars or paddles."

For these reasons, in all probability, Fitch made the first of three successive alterations in the method by which his boat was to be propelled. On September 27, 1785, he attended the meeting of the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, and laid before that organization an amended drawing and model of his invention. The records of the Society on the subject read:

"Tuesday, September 27, 1785.

"The model, with a Drawing and Description, of a Machine for working a Boat against the stream by means of a steam-engine, was laid before the Society by Mr. John Fitch."

"December 2nd, 1785.

"A copy of the Drawing and Description of a machine for rowing a boat against the current, which sometime ago was laid before the Society by Mr. John Fitch, he this evening presented to them."

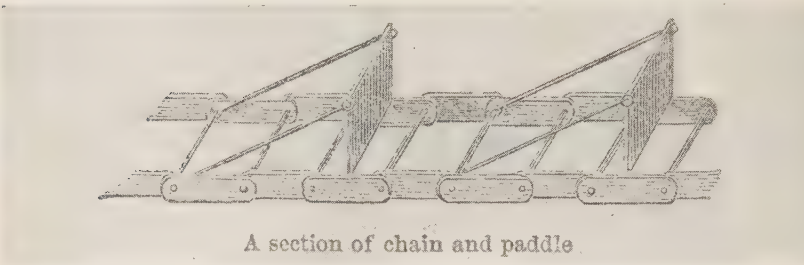
The model was preserved by the Society. By 1857, when Westcott investigated the subject and wrote his life of the inventor, all the drawings and descriptions were missing.

By reference to the illustration of Fitch's second

model it will be seen that he had substituted, in place of paddle-wheels, a series of upright paddles attached to endless chains, which passed over a roller toward the bow of the boat, entered the water, propelled the craft, and emerged to repeat the circuit. A section of the endless chain of paddles is also reproduced.

Fitch had worked himself into a mental frenzy. He believed he was on the right track, and was certain he could propel a boat by steam. No other thought possessed him. His days were given to alternate pleadings and arguments, or else to fits of rage, melancholy or exasperation because he was penniless and could not go ahead without help from others. But since aid was plainly necessary he set out to get it, armed with a determination to compel attention and secure the necessary money from some source either public or private. He began, therefore, a methodic visitation of legislatures and persons in high place that was as apparently endless as his system of paddles. His first effort was an attempt to enlist the interest of Benjamin Franklin, to whom he wrote a letter on October 12th. In urging the necessity of steamboats to Franklin he said: "It is a matter in his [Fitch's] opinion of the first Magnitude not only to the United States, but to every Maratime power in the World, as he is full in the belief that it will answer for sea Voiages, as well as for inland Navigation, in particular for Packets where there should be a great number of Pasengers." This letter Westcott found in possession of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia.

The next victim of the inventor's importunities was ex-Governor Thomas Johnson, of Maryland, who got rid of him by suggesting that he go to see General Washington. So Fitch posted forthwith to Mount Vernon, where



65.—Detail of the propulsion method of Fitch's first boat. The paddles were out of water as they moved forward, and after passing the front roller they entered the water and proceeded toward the stern, thus forcing the boat ahead.

the General, he says, received him with courtesy and listened to his plans. That was the usual thing. Everybody always received him, and everybody listened, or appeared to. His next stopping place was Richmond, in Virginia, where the legislature was in session. Legislatures at that time were Fitch's especial prey, and his memorial to the Virginia Assembly was presented by no less a person than James Madison. A committee was duly appointed — familiar procedure to the poverty-stricken man who was begging for the opportunity of enriching the world beyond computation — and its members spoke very favorably to the petitioner. But they made no report. He also saw Patrick Henry, then governor of the state, who said the plan was novel and interesting.

Returning to Fredericktown he again went to ex-Governor Johnson, who hastily subscribed to Fitch's map of the Northwest Territory as a means of being rid of him, and suggested that the legislature of Maryland was in session at Annapolis. So indeed it was, but Fitch was also aware that the Pennsylvania Assembly had gathered again in Philadelphia, and he went there first, presenting his usual petition. It was referred to a committee who made

a flattering oral report, but no action was taken. Finally, at Annapolis, and for the first time, Fitch's plan received formal notice. The Maryland legislature considered it for three days and then refused to endorse the invention. The committee said that although it was desirable "for liberal and enlightened Legislators to encourage useful arts," yet the state and condition of the state's finances did not permit such action in that instance. His next stopping place on the trip was at Dover, in Delaware. Fitch talked with the members of the legislature and doubtless finding the effort useless did not present his plan, but departed for Philadelphia. In February of 1786 he went to Trenton. On the defeat of his bill by the New Jersey legislature he returned to his home.

Fitch had then appealed to all the powerful men within his reach, to five states, and to the General Congress, without effect. Not one mind grasped the value of the idea. So he decided to begin all over again, and went once more to Doctor Franklin. That eminent man spoke in a calm and complimentary vein, declined to endorse the steamboat, and then, taking Fitch into another room, privately offered to give him several dollars in cash. The incensed inventor refused the money except as a subscription toward the building of the boat and withdrew in anger from the abode of philosophy.

Doubtless Benjamin Franklin had never before made such a mistake in his diagnosis of a fellow man, but doubtless, also, the same error would have been made by others as profound as he, if such there were. The tall, gaunt, shabby, excitable, almost incoherent enthusiast, pouring out words in a frantic effort to make others see the future as he saw it, already presented to many minds the spectacle of a madman babbling over a phantasy.

But the turning-point was almost at hand. After still another appeal to the Assembly of Pennsylvania which he left to its usual fate, he rushed away again to Trenton where he petitioned the New Jersey legislature for a special law giving to him the exclusive right to navigate the waters of that state by steam power. He had altered his tactics, and instead of trying to get money first he begged for legal privileges, hoping the necessary cash would be easier to secure if his claim as an inventor was recognized. This application was successful. On March 18, 1786, New Jersey granted to Fitch "The sole and exclusive right of constructing, making, using and employing, or navigating, all and every species or kinds of boats, or water craft, which might be urged or impelled by the force of fire or steam, in all the creeks, rivers, etc., within the territory or jurisdiction of this state." The right so given was to exist for fourteen years.

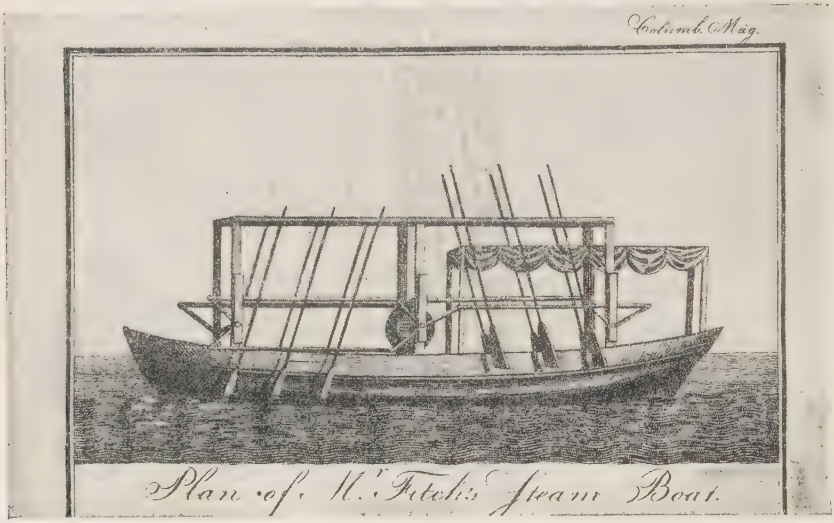
Whatever historical interest New Jersey's action of 1786 may have as a landmark in the evolution of travel facilities is overshadowed by its greater importance in another respect. The passage of Fitch's bill was the first step on a pathway of error along which the country stumbled for more than half a century, and some effects of the mistake are still visible throughout the whole modern system of American transportation. New Jersey's grant was a declaration of the principle that individuals or individual companies might hold exclusive privileges for the transporting of passengers and freight by certain methods within the limits of any state. Imitated, as it was, by other commonwealths, the idea thus established split the country into small fragments on the one feature of national development which, above all others, called for a policy continental in its scope.

The effect of the monopolistic privilege on Fitch's plans was highly favorable. Within five weeks he had organized a little company of nearly twenty men, and of the forty equal shares he was to have one-half for his invention and services. The others paid about twenty dollars each, and something over three hundred dollars was on hand with which to build the first American steamboat. At this time — April of 1786 — there were but three steam-engines in America. All were built on the old atmospheric plan, and the newest of them, that at the Schuyler mine, near Passaic, New Jersey, had been brought from England thirty years before. The other two were in New England, and still older. No one in the country had ever made anything like the engine that Fitch called for, nor was any man known to possess the skill necessary to do it. In the face of such conditions he started to create, out of nothing more tangible than the ideas of his brain, a vehicle that should navigate the water by means of power contained within its own fabric. The element of human invention had at last been applied to the problem of transportation.

While concerned over the proper construction of his engine Fitch fell in with an ingenious Philadelphia watchmaker named Henry Voight, and enlisted his services in the work. Together they built a small skiff and an engine with a three-inch cylinder, and about July 20, 1786, for the first time operated a steamboat on American waters. The miniature machinery and chain of paddles worked but poorly, and a little group who watched the boat from the shore jeered the two men and the wonder they had performed. Some local notoriety had attended the formation of the company and plan of the inventor, but all public comment was by word of mouth, accom-

panied by winks and jests. The newspapers made no mention of the matter. It was a joke, ill-fitted to the serious times and to those matters of consequence that engrossed popular attention.

A few days after this experiment Fitch conceived the idea of propelling the boat by a series of twelve upright



66.—Fitch's second boat. With his little experimental engine and upright oars it was operated on the Delaware River, at Philadelphia, in 1786. The contemporary engraving here reproduced is that printed in the *Columbian Magazine* for December, 1786. By an oversight the engraver of 1786 omitted to show the smoke-pipe.

paddles, like oars, arranged six on each side and operated by a system of cranks. The device was accordingly built and fitted to the skiff, and was found to move the craft with increased speed and power. It was nevertheless seen that additional money was needed for larger machinery and a bigger boat, in order to carry on a test under conditions more nearly approaching the practical commercial vehicle toward which the inventor was aiming.

Neither during his earlier efforts nor at any time did Fitch falter in his certainty that he had hit upon a means of transportation which would alter the affairs of mankind, or that he would succeed in producing, in concrete form, the thing his brain had already constructed. It was amid these days that he wrote a letter to Stacy Potts, a member of the company, in which he said: "My expectations are daily increasing as to the success of our undertaking, and dout not but it will be a matter of the first magnitude to the World."[1] Two other letters written by the inventor at the same time show an identical frame of mind. One was a petition to the Pennsylvania Assembly asking for a loan of £150,[2] in which he spoke of steam transportation as "a plan that would enrich America at least 3 times as much as all that country N.W. [northwest] of the Ohio, as it would make that country four times as valuable, beside the inconceivable advantages to the settled portion of the continent." In the same communication he defined a characteristic of the people by saying, "There is such a strange infatuation in mankind that it seems they would rather lay out their money in Beloons[3] and Fireworks, and be a pest to Society than to lay it out in something that would be of use to themselves and Country." The legislature refused to make the requested loan. The other letter was a similar request addressed to General Thomas Mifflin, of Pennsylvania, in which Fitch declared: "I am of opinion, that a vessel may be carried six, seven or eight miles per hour, by the force of steam, and the larger the vessel, the better it will answer, and am strongly inclined

[1] This letter, quoted by Westcott in his biography of Fitch, has long been lost. It was recently rediscovered by Emil Sauer, the antiquary, and presented to the New York Historical Society by S. V. Hoffman, Esq., the President of that Institution, together with five other important Fitch documents found with it.

[2] It was the custom at that time for state legislatures to advance money to inventors for the prosecution of enterprises useful to society. The Pennsylvania Assembly, a few weeks before, had loaned another man £300 for the manufacture of bar iron.

[3] Balloons had lately been invented, and had been shown in America for the first time.

to believe that it will answer for sea Voiages as well as for inland Navigation. . . . Was it a thing of trifling consequence to my Country, I would not persue it with such assiduity."

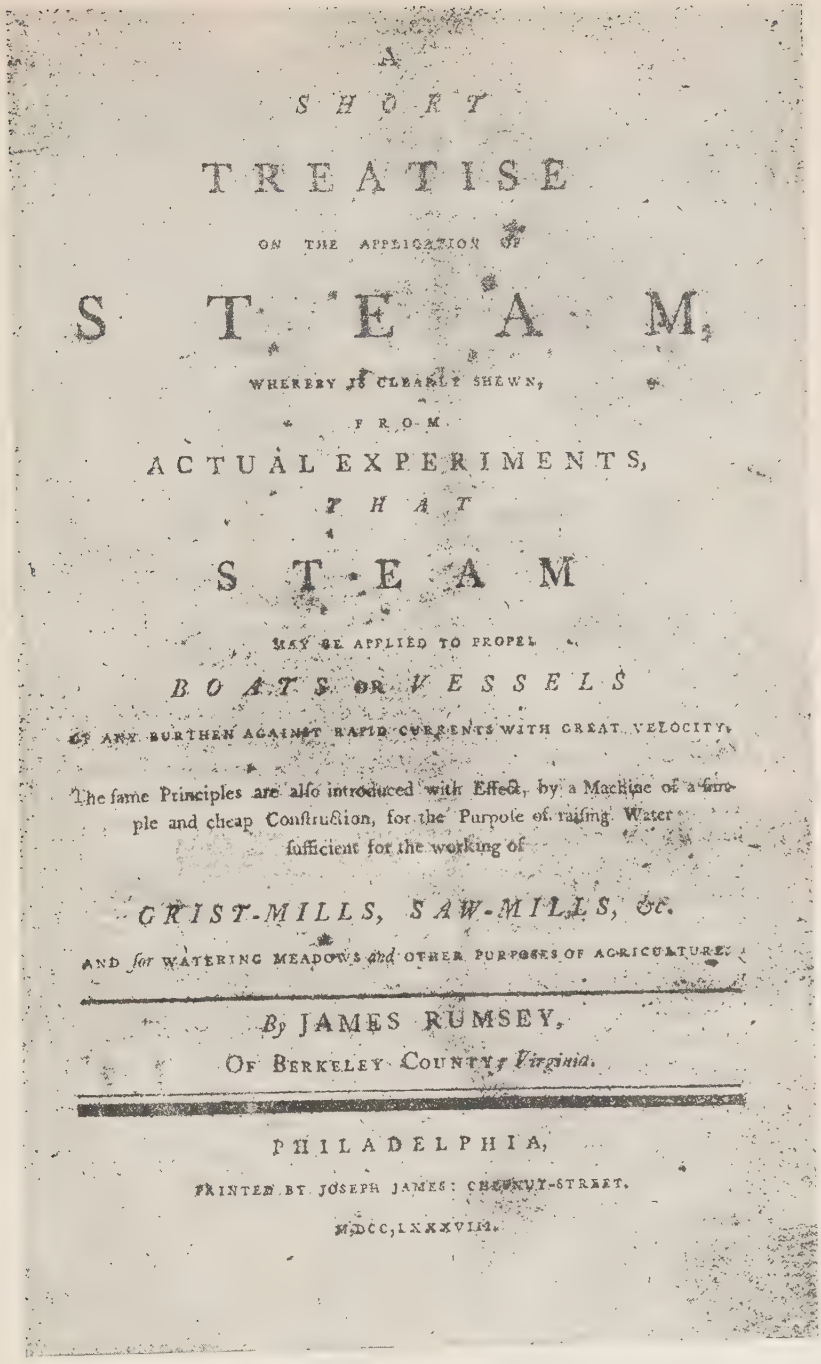
All Fitch's efforts to obtain enough money in 1786 to enable him to continue the work were fruitless. In that year he deposited his plans and drawings with the American Philosophical Society, in Philadelphia, but like so much other material evidence of his invention, those things disappeared. When Westcott sought for them[1] they were not to be found. The models and drawings of Fitch's early boats were destroyed by the burning of the United States Patent Office in 1836. One contemporary evidence of what was done in 1786 remains. It is the picture of his second boat, engraved on copper and published in the *Columbian Magazine* for December of that year,[2] together with a brief reference to the mechanism then used which was soon afterward printed in the same periodical. The illustration in this work is photographed from the original printed in 1786. A part of the contemporary description of the mechanism of the second boat said:

"The piston is to move about three feet, and each vibration of the piston turns the axle tree about two-thirds round. They propose to make the piston to strike thirty strokes in a minute; which will give the axle-tree about forty revolutions. Each revolution of the axle-tree moves twelve oars five and a half feet. As six oars come out of the water six more enter the water; which makes a stroke of about eleven feet each revolution. The oars work perpendicularly, and make a stroke similar to the paddle of a canoe . . . and both the action and reaction of the piston operate to turn the axle-tree the same way."[3]

[1] About 1856.

[2] Through some odd oversight the engraver showed no smoke-stack.

[3] The thing that prevented early engineers up to about 1780 from developing the steam-engine, was the difficulty of converting the back-and-fourth motion of the piston into a rotary motion by means of a wheel moved by the piston. The mechanical principle thus sought had been in use for centuries on domestic spinning wheels, but no one thought of applying it to steam-engines until Pickard, in 1780, devised the crank attachment by which the dead point of the wheel was passed and a complete revolution obtained.



A

SHORT

TREATISE

ON THE APPLICATION OF

STEAM,

WHEREBY IS CLEARLY SHEWN,

FROM

ACTUAL EXPERIMENTS,

THAT

STEAM

MAY BE APPLIED TO PROPEL

BOATS OR VESSELS

OF ANY BURTHEN AGAINST RAPID CURRENTS WITH GREAT VELOCITY.

The ſame Principles are alſo introduced with Effect, by a Machine of a ſimple and cheap Conſtruction, for the Purpoſe of raiſing Water ſufficient for the working of

GRIST-MILLS, SAW-MILLS, &c.

AND for WATERING MEADOWS and OTHER PURPOSES OF AGRICULTURE.

By JAMES RUMSEY,

OF BERKELEY COUNTY, Virginia.

PHILADELPHIA,

PRINTED BY JOSEPH JAMES: CHESNUT-STREET.

M,DCC,LXXXVIII.

67.—Early literature relating to travel in America. Title page of Rumsey's pamphlet claiming precedence over Fitch as a steamboat inventor. Second edition of the first American book on steamboats. Printed in 1788.

Fitch was reduced to temporary inactivity through lack of money. Some members of his company had originally subscribed because of friendship for the inventor with no hope of return, while others, over-enthusiastic, had expected large and immediate results from their investments. Both sorts were disinclined to make further contributions, and in extremity Fitch turned again to the various legislatures in an effort to secure recognition of his rights as an inventor, and privileges in the use of the steamboat. His applications to some of those bodies were fought by various other men who had suggested improvements in the use of steam as applied to existing contrivances, but Fitch met such opposition boldly. In his statement to the Pennsylvania Assembly he said, among other things:

"I never pretended to be the first inventor of the steam engine, nor ever did Petition for an Exclusive right for them. I have never asked it in any other way than where it has never been applied, and I presume the World cannot produce a steam engine floating on the water. Neither do I conceive that all the Improvements that are yet to be made on steam are to be done on the water . . .

"I here produce seven different plans of applying the force of steam to a boat, and could produce four different models, if necessary . . .

"It is the force and power that I contend for. As to the thought of applying that force to vessels I claim priority, and not the mode of application. . . .

"It is an undoubted fact that I am the first inventor of the steamboat[1]; . . . I have set myself up as a mark of derision, and have suffered every insult that the contempt which the populace have for projectors could inflict. . . .

"The propelling of a boat with steam is as new as the rowing of a boat with angels, and I claim the first thought and invention of it."

Opposition collapsed before words like that, and the lawmakers recognized the inventor's claim. The state of Delaware, on February 3, 1787, gave to Fitch the exclu-

[1] He was the first in America, but not in the world. His work and devices show that he did not know of earlier similar inventions mentioned in a later chapter.

sive right to navigate all its waters by boats propelled in any way by steam for a period of fourteen years. New York passed a similar act on March 19 of the same year; Pennsylvania gave him identical privileges on March 28, and Virginia took like action on November 7. Each commonwealth bestowed on him a monopoly of steam navigation within its limits for a period of years, as New Jersey had previously done; but two of the states also took certain action that was, in the future, to have far reaching and long continued effect on the history of steam transportation in America. Virginia included in her law a proviso that Fitch must have "boats" — obviously meaning more than one — in operation on the waters of the state within a period of three years, and New York ordered that if any other man usurped the rights granted, such interloper was to forfeit £100 to Fitch and suffer the confiscation of his boat and engine by the original inventor. The stipulation made by Virginia was thought to be of especial value to the company, for as that state had long claimed sovereignty over much of the territory extending to the Mississippi River, a compliance with it meant, in the estimation of the company, that Fitch and his associates would enjoy a monopoly of steam transportation on the Ohio, upper Mississippi and other interior streams.

The action of Delaware and the other states elated the company and stirred it to renewed activity.[1] Success and wealth seemed assured. More money was subscribed, and Fitch and his assistant again began work in the production of a larger boat and an engine with a twelve-inch cylinder. Again they were balked in their efforts to produce a smooth-working mechanism. The task was a hard

[1] A new agreement was drawn up on February 9, 1787, which Westcott found in the American Philosophical Society archives when preparing his biography.

one. They were hampered by a lack of knowledge of the relationships and proportions which cylinder, condenser, boiler, pump and other parts of a steam-engine should bear to one another. They were building out of nothing, and could learn only by experience and repeated failure. No sooner did they have one part of the contrivance perfect than something else failed. In May of 1787 the whole engine was taken down and rebuilt at heavy cost, and once more the company became so discouraged that some of its members abandoned the enterprise altogether. But Fitch remained stubborn in his resolution to go on, wrote a long address to the public in which he elaborately reviewed his invention, reaffirmed his certainty in its value, pointed out its advantages in opening the country to white settlement, and used the words: "The Grand and Principle object must be on the Atlantick; which would soon overspread the wild forests of America with people, and make us the most oppulent Empire on Earth. . . . Pardon me, generous public, for suggesting ideas that cannot be dijested at this day."

CHAPTER XV

FITCH'S SECOND BOAT — CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNTS OF IT — THE THIRD VESSEL — FIRST REGULARLY OPERATED STEAMBOAT IN THE WORLD — IT IS RUN ON THE DELAWARE FOR SEVERAL MONTHS — MORE CONTEMPORARY STATEMENTS — DISASTER — THE INVENTOR IS CALLED A MADMAN — PERSISTS "FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR EMPIRE" — GOES TO FRANCE AND LEAVES HIS PLANS THERE — RETIRES TO THE KENTUCKY WILDERNESS AND MAKES A STRANGE WHEELED ENGINE — DESPAIR — DEATH

FITCH'S persistence once more had its way. His associates found additional funds, the second boat was completed, and on August 22, 1787, it was operated under its own power on the Delaware River in the presence of many people, including most of the members of the Constitutional Convention then sitting in Philadelphia. Still there was no general recognition of one of the most important events that had taken place since Columbus discovered the western world. The few current references to Fitch's work are short, and lacking in comprehension of the effect the invention was destined to have on man's progress. He himself seems to have been the only individual rightly to measure what he was doing. One of the contemporary mentions of the test of August 22nd occurs in a day-book kept by the Reverend Ezra

Stiles, of New Haven, who under date of August 27 made in his diary the following entry:

"Judge Ellsworth, a member of the Federal Convention, just returned from Philadelphia, visited me, and tells me the Convention will not rise under three weeks. He there saw a Steam-engine for rowing boats against the stream, invented by Mr. Fitch, of Windsor, in Connecticut. He was on board the boat, and saw the experiment succeed."

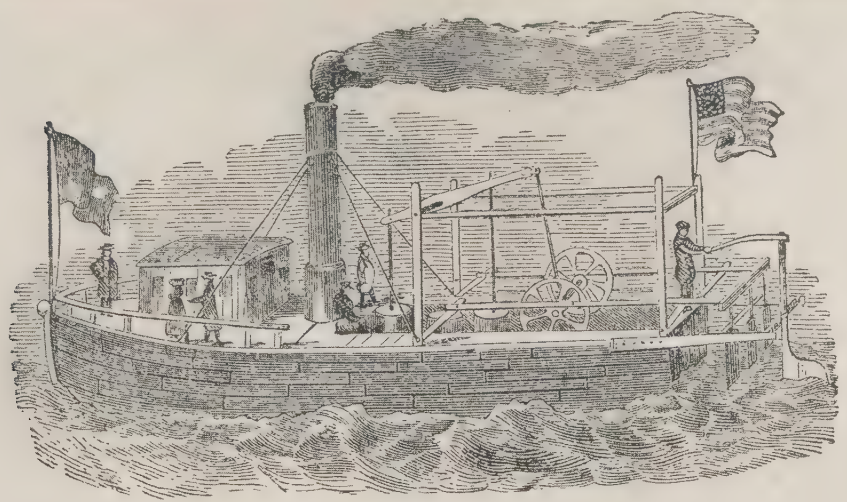
Another mention of the boat made at about the same time was contained in a written statement by David Rittenhouse, an early American scientist, who said under date of December 12, 1787:

"These may certify that the subscriber has frequently seen Mr. Fitch's steamboat, which with great labour and perseverance he has at length compleated, and has likewise been on board when the boat was worked against both wind and tide, with a very considerable degree of velocity by the force of steam only. Mr. Fitch's merit in constructing a good steam engine, and applying it to so useful a purpose, will no doubt meet with the encouragement he so justly deserves from the generousity of his countrymen; especially those who wish to promote every improvement of the useful arts in America."[1]

At about this time the inventor became involved in a controversy with James Rumsey, of Virginia, who had previously invented a boat in which the setting poles whereby it was propelled were to be operated through a system of mechanical cranks operated by wheels and hand power. Rumsey apparently found that such a device was not of value for he soon turned to the use of steam, and at first devised a boat based somewhat on a previous idea of Doctor Franklin, who had suggested that a forward movement might be obtained by forcibly ejecting a stream of water from the stern of the craft. Rumsey found many supporters among prominent men,[2] and an association

[1] Westcott's "Life of John Fitch."

[2] Fitch was an anti-Federalist, and his political, social and religious beliefs brought upon him the dislike of many who held contrary views. It was a time wherein personal idiosyncrasies were peculiarly potent in fixing the estimate in which a man was held by his fellow citizens. Men were often opposed in some projects because their opinions on irrelevant matters were not endorsed. Fitch encountered such opposition.



THE FIRST STEAMBOAT EVER BUILT TO CARRY PASSENGERS.

Constructed by John Fitch, and finished April 16th. 1798. Cylinder eighteen inches in diameter, speed eight miles per hour in smooth water. The following year this boat was run to Burlington regularly as a passenger boat.

68.—A later picture of Fitch's third boat. No contemporary illustration is known. First steamboat and first steam vehicle of any sort employed in the business of transportation. It made a trial trip of 20 miles in 1788, and in 1790 ran more than 1,000 miles on the Delaware River in accordance with advertisements printed in the Philadelphia newspapers. The date on the reproduced engraving is an error.

called the Rumseyian Society was organized to further his claims as the inventor of the steamboat. The Rumseyian Society, at a little later date, attempted before various state legislatures to obtain the repeal of laws favorable to Fitch, but without effect.

In order to protect the interests of himself and his company Fitch was compelled to collect evidence concerning the claims of Rumsey, and to take part in a war of pamphlets in defense of his work.[1] This consumed some time, and in addition the inventor went to New York, where Congress was in session, to present a memorial to that body. The petition[2] said among other things: "Haveing overcome every difficulty that ocationed doubts to arise, and having done what was never done before, (The world has been worrying against the stream this six thousand years) but we have exhibited to the World a Vessel going against strong winds and Tides, without sails, or men to labour; the Vessel carrying the Engine, the Engine propelling the Vessel, and all moveing together against the Currents." The report of the committee of Congress on the petition was favorable, but no action by the whole body was taken.

After his return to Philadelphia Fitch resumed work on the engine and the company bought a large boat in

[1] Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania had passed acts in 1784 and 1785 giving Rumsey rights in his pole boat, and the action of the same states, at a later date, in recognizing Fitch as the inventor of a method of propelling boats by steam power indicate there was no conflict in the systems of propulsion devised by the two men. Had there been such duplication Fitch could not have received the rights granted to him. There being no central patent office, the several states settled such questions of priority and privilege.

The original pamphlets of Rumsey and Fitch, published in 1788, are now very rare, but their text is reprinted in O'Callaghan's "Documentary History of New York." An analysis of the statements they contain, together with a chronology of the dispute, are also to be found in Westcott's "Life." A study of them will be of value to those interested in the subject. Rumsey succeeded in moving a boat by steam at the rate of about three miles an hour in December of 1787, and in 1788 he went to England, where he afterward died. His English associates built a boat that was operated by steam on the Thames in 1793, but was abandoned. Woodcroft, in his "History of Steam Navigation," refers to Rumsey's work in England.

[2] The complete text is given by Westcott.

which it was to be installed. This craft, destined to be the first steam vehicle of any sort in the world to make regularly scheduled and advertised trips for the carriage of passengers, was forty-five feet long and twelve feet wide. The company had desired to obtain a hull about sixty feet in length by eight feet beam, rightly believing such a model would obtain greater speed, but was unable to do so. It had also been the inventor's intention to use a cylinder of eighteen inches diameter in his engine, but after one of that size had been cast it was broken up by mistake. So the old twelve-inch cylinder was retained. At this time, also, Fitch made another change in his method of propulsion, substituting three or four broad upright paddles at the stern of the craft for the twelve side oars. The third boat with its essential features as here described was completed late in July of 1788, and — probably on one of the last days of that month — received its first important trial. It set out from Philadelphia bearing Fitch, Voight and a number of others, and steamed to Burlington, a distance of about twenty miles. When just off Burlington a leak developed in the boiler and the engine stopped. The crew dropped down the stream with the tide next day, and the steamboat was the object of scoffing from those in sailing craft on the river.

The mishap which had interrupted the first trip of the inventor's third boat almost at its conclusion was soon repaired, and several other round trips to Burlington were made during the following weeks. On October 12th, 1788, the steamboat took thirty passengers to Burlington in three hours and ten minutes, aided by a tide running about two miles an hour. Probably the speed developed by the vessel during 1788 was some four miles an hour

in still water. Such a slow rate of movement did not satisfy Fitch, who, despite the personal destitution to which he had long since been reduced, insistently demanded more funds for the boat[1] and continued his labor in improving the machinery and in repeated tests of the vessel until the spring of 1790. At last he obtained a combination of mechanical parts that worked successfully, and on April 16th of 1790 made a trial which caused him to say exultantly: "We reigned Lord High Admirals of the Delaware; and no boat in the River could hold its way with us. . . . Thus has been effected, by little Johnny Fitch and Harry Voight, one of the greatest and most useful arts that has ever been introduced into the world; and although the world and my country does not thank me for it, yet it gives me heartfelt satisfaction."[2]

A number of other equally successful voyages soon followed, and for the first time public and newspaper attention was attracted to the invention. Governor Mifflin and numerous state and city officials were passengers on June 16th, and were so impressed that they had Fitch buy a set of flags at their expense. A cabin was built for passengers in the forward part of the craft, and at a formal test made by the aid of stop-watches the speed of the boat was found to be eight miles an hour.[3] Soon afterward it covered eighty miles in a day and was then put into commission as a regular passenger boat on the Delaware, making trips in accordance with advertisements previously printed in the local newspapers. The first of these advance notices of the steamboat's trips had ap-

[1] About $8,000 had been expended up to the winter of 1788.
[2] The spot on the river-front where Fitch had so long labored had come to be known as "Conjurer's Point."
[3] Thornton's "Short Account of the Origin of Steamboats": p. 5.

Mr. Cornell, sworn interpreter, to all which the Creeks gave an audible assent.

The President then signed the treaty—after which he presented a string of beads as a token of perpetual peace, and a piece of silver to mark a remembrance of it by. Mr. McGillivray rose, made a short reply to the President, and received the beads.

This was succeeded by the Dance of peace, every one of the Creeks putting this friendly talent with the President; a *long* of peace performed by the Creeks, concluded this highly interesting, solemn, and dignified transaction.

Aug. 16. Last Thursday evening the St. Andrew's Society of the state of New-York held their quarterly meeting at the City-Tavern. The Society, desirous of shewing their respect to the daughter of Col. McGillivray, evident by the love of his presence in this city, and unanimously elected him an honorary member of the Society, and immediately after a committee was appointed to conduct him to it.

Aug. 17. On Sunday embarked on board one of the Packets, on a visit to Rhode-Island, his Excellency the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, Gov. Clinton, Judge Blair, Col. Hamilton, Major Jackson, and Mr. Nelson.

Extract of a letter from Philadelphia.

Aug. 17.

"Fitch's boat has really performed to a charm. It is a pleasure while sailing on board her to a considerable degree to observe her operations. She goes, stops, &c. when, to all appearance, she will make a zigzag course while she is now moving rapid, pursuing a direct line. On Sunday morning she started for Chester, and arrived in season in the evening, the whole way with a Gale, I mean to be one of the passengers, were it only to see a large American ship under sail and one fine wind. She is generally out of the reach of common vessels, and will certainly answer the purpose I am told he has now in contemplation to build a large vessel on a larger scale, which may be capable of carrying freights and passengers to the West-Indies, and even to Europe. One great advantage I can perceive in these vessels, which is, that she, if even ship can make progress in a calm when other vessels must be motionless. How she would behave in a gale of wind could be left to experience to determine. Having no sails, masts or top hamper, to lay too or scud under, it is probable she might at such time be in good jeopardy."

Aug. 20. On the 17th inst. the Trustees of the College of Philadelphia elected the Hon. Judge Wilson, President of Law in that institution, and we hope he has undertaken to give a course of lectures in that important branch of education.

Query. *Whether it is not as important both to the Law and Physic, a Professorship, and a Chair in the College of Philadelphia?*

Aug. 21. His Excellency the President, with his suite, returned safe to this from Rhode-Island.

On Tuesday the 19th inst. was buried in St. Mary's [illegible], in Georgia, in the deep [illegible] the Honorable Lachlan McGillivray, Esq. the late Indian Head-man and Warrior, who have been in this city for [illegible] attending the treaty. [illegible] Col. McGillivray, and his [illegible]

Aug. 23. We are informed, that before the 1st of June last the Assembly of Virginia [illegible] the National Affairs [illegible] Dr. Rittenhouse [illegible]

69.—Page 493 of the *New York Magazine* for 1790. The printed account of Fitch's steamboat, beginning at the bottom of the first column, relates to the vessel last shown.

peared in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of June 14, 1790, and read:

THE STEAMBOAT

is now ready to take passengers, and is intended to set off from Arch street Ferry, in Philadelphia, every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, for Burlington, Bristol, Bordentown, & Trenton, to return on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Price for passengers 2/6 to Burlington and Bristol, 3/9 to Bordentown, 5 s. to Trenton.

tu.-th. s-tf.

During the summer and fall of 1790 the boat ran regularly back and forth between Philadelphia and various towns on the river. The *Pennsylvania Packet* and *Federal Gazette* newspapers issued between June 14th and September 10th of 1790 contained twenty-three advertisements similar to the one here quoted, announcing, altogether, thirty-one trips to different places. The aggregate of the advertised trips amounted to thirteen hundred and eighty miles. Fitch, in his manuscript journal, says the mishaps were few. "The axle-trees," he mentions, "broke twice; there was nothing but these accidents which could not be repaired in a single hour or two. . . . The boat run five hundred miles between these accidents."

Numerous accounts of the performances of 1790, either published at the time or written at a later day by men who had personally travelled on the boat or had seen it in operation during the year, are available. The artist Rembrandt Peale was one who was familiar with its work during the time in question, and his memoirs[1] describe its appearance and movement. General Joseph Bloomfield, of New Jersey, testified before a committee of the New York legislature in 1814 that he had frequently been a passenger on Fitch's boat on the Delaware.[2] Doc-

[1] Printed in the "Collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania," Vol. 1, No. 1.
[2] "New York Review," Vol. IV.

tor William Thornton's[1] pamphlet gives the recital of an eye-witness of and participant in the steamboat's activities. "Our boat," he said, "went at the rate of eight miles an hour in the presence of witnesses yet living."[2] The French author and traveller, Brissot de Warville, wrote a description of the third boat as it appeared when he saw it operated in 1788, while its speed was only about four miles an hour.[3] The most pretentious contemporary American notice of the vessel's successful operation in 1790 was published in the *New York Magazine*[4] for that year, and was an extract from a letter sent from Philadelphia. It ran:

"Fitch's steamboat really performs to a charm. It is a pleasure, while one is on board of her in a contrary wind, to observe her superiority over the river shallops, sloops, ships, etc., who, to gain anything, must make a zigzag course, while this, our new invented vessel, proceeds in a direct line. On Sunday morning she sets off for Chester,[5] and engages to return in the evening — 40 miles. God willing, I intend to be one of the passengers, were it only to encourage American ingenuity and the fine arts. Fitch is certainly one of the most ingenious creatures alive, and will certainly make his fortune. . . ."

The thing Fitch said he would do had been done. After five years of endeavor the steamboat existed, and moved briskly over the waters before the eyes of men. Steam had been harnessed and applied to the purposes of transportation and travel. A fourth boat,[6] similar to the one which had been running on the Delaware during the summer, was begun in order to comply with the Virginia law. Under its terms at least two steam vessels had to be in operation on the waters of the state by

[1] Thornton was a member of Fitch's company. His account, written in 1810 and published in 1818, is entitled "Short Account of the Origin of Steamboats."
[2] United States Patent Office Report for 1850; Part I, pp. 368-372.
[3] "A Recent Journey in the United States of North America, Made in 1788." Paris, 1791.
[4] Page 493. Photographically reproduced in this work.
[5] The regular Sunday trips of the boat throughout the summer of 1790 were to Chester or Burlington. They were somewhat in the nature of popular excursions.
[6] It was fittingly named the "Perseverance."

November 9th, 1790, and the time in which to comply with the requirement and secure a monopoly of steam transportation on all Virginia waters was short. Unforeseen disaster destroyed the plans of the company. The *Perseverance,* when nearly completed, was torn from her moorings by a violent storm and thrown at high tide on an island in the river from which it was impossible to remove her until too late to fulfill the conditions under which Virginia's privileges had been granted.

The loss of the Virginia monopoly came as a crushing blow to Fitch's associates, for upon it had been based their principal expectations of future profit. And so, at the very outset of success, the faint-hearted company finally crumbled to pieces. The inventor alone held up his courage. He at once petitioned the Commissioners of Patents to grant him exclusive rights in steam navigation for a limited time; originated a plan to put boats on the Mississippi under the patronage of Spain, and chided his former supporters in a letter in which he said:

"After the many thousands which you have expended to bring forward the most useful art that was ever introduced into the World, and even after you have perfected it, it seems that you are amazed at what you have done, and lost in contemplating, in thinking, how the world will gaze on the virtuous Few who have so nobly and liberally rendered such essential service to their Nation. . . .

"We had to explore an unbeaten path, and did not ascertain the true course until we had wandered into a thousand wrong Rodes. . . .

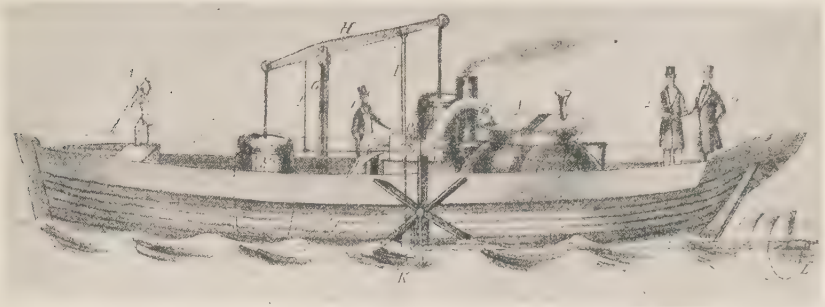
"I have given my country a most valuable discovery, on the 30 of August, 1785, for which I have received no compensation; and I doubt not but common justice will induce them to do something for me; especially when they can do it for the benefit of our Empire.

"Another inducement which urges me to persue this scheme is, to put it out of the power of future Generations to make excuses for the present one . . ."

In his long petition[1] to the national officials asking for

[1] Given in its entirety by Westcott.

the sole right to employ steamboats on all the waters of the country Fitch, "having," as he affirmed, "at length fully succeeded in his scheme, proof of which he is prepared to offer, he trusts he now comes forward, not as an imaginary projector, but as a man who, contrary to



70.—Fitch's fifth boat. His fourth was wrecked by a storm when nearly completed. The fifth boat was a screw propeller, operated on Collect Pond, New York City, in 1796 or 1797. Its hull was a ship's yawl, and the craft was an experiment in the inventor's work for the better application of steam power. A model of one of Fitch's steamboats, later made by one of his assistants, is in the New York Historical Society's collections.

the popular expectation, has really accomplished a design which on examination will clearly evince the many and important advantages which must result therefrom to the United States. . . ."[1]

All active effort to carry on the work of building and running steamboats seems to have been abandoned in 1791. Biddle's *Philadelphia Directory* for the year mentioned, published in May, contained the following entry:

"Fitch, John, owner of the steamboat, 462 No. Second St."

A picture of the affairs of the company and of Fitch's destitution at that time was afterward written by Thomas

[1] Letters patent for the steamboat were granted by the government to Fitch on April 23, 1791, and formally issued to him in a signed document on August 26. Exclusive privileges were refused. Thomas Jefferson, whom Fitch had violently antagonized, was one of the Patent Commissioners.

P. Cope, of Philadelphia,[1] who lived in the city during the building of the steamboats.

"I often witnessed the performance of the boat in 1788, '89 and '90," reads the narrative. "It was propelled by paddles in the stern, and constantly getting out of order. I saw it when it was returning from a trip to Burlington, from whence it was said to have arrived in little more than two hours. When coming to off Kensington, some part of the machinery broke, and I never saw it in motion afterward. I believe it was his last effort. . . . Indeed, they [the company] already rendered themselves the subjects of ridicule and derision, for their temerity and presumption in giving countenance to this wild projector and visionary madman. The company thereupon gave up the ghost, the boat went to pieces, and Fitch became bankrupt and broken-hearted. Often have I seen him stalking about like a troubled spectre, with downcast eye and lowering countenance, his coarse soiled linen peeping through the elbows of a tattered garment. During the days of his aspiring hopes, two mechanics were of sufficient daring to work for him. . . . These were Peter Brown, shipsmith, and John Wilson, Boat builder. . . . From Wilson I derived the following anecdote: Fitch called to see him as usual — Brown happened to be present. Fitch mounted his hobby, and became unusually eloquent in the praise of steam, and of the benefits which mankind were destined to derive from its use in propelling boats . . . After indulging himself for some time in this never failing topic of deep excitement, he concluded with these memorable words: 'Well, gentlemen, although I shall not live to see the time, you will, when steamboats will be preferred to all other means of conveyance, and especially for passengers; and they will be particularly useful in the navigation of the River Mississippi.' He then retired; on which Brown, turning to Wilson, exclaimed, in a tone of deep sympathy, 'Poor fellow! What a pity he is crazy.'"

In 1793 Fitch went to France.[2] He had previously met in Philadelphia a man named Aaron Vail, the United States consul to L'Orient, France, who became interested in the steamboat and proposed, on his return to his official post, to secure patents and build such vessels under French laws. Fitch had bound himself to send over to Europe a man competent to construct the proposed craft,

[1] To be found in Hazard's "Register of Pennsylvania," Vol. vii, under the signature of "Epoc." [Cope].

[2] See Thornton's "Short Account"; William A. Duer's "A Reply to C. D. Colden's Vindication," 1819; Watson's "Annals of Philadelphia"; Whittelsey's "Life," etc.

and having no one to whom he might delegate the duty, went himself. He arrived during a time when all ordinary enterprises were at a standstill,[1] and finding it impossible to proceed with the contemplated design, left his steamboat drawings, plans and specifications in the hands of Vail, who was established as a merchant in L'Orient, and came back to America by way of England.

Little of Fitch's work remains to be told. He lived in Philadelphia and New York City until late in 1797 or early in 1798, and seems still to have been intent in perfecting the method of steam transportation. In 1851 John Hutchings, of New York, published a broadside[2] describing an experiment that Fitch made with a steamboat on Collect Pond, New York City,[3] either in 1796 or 1797, and in which Hutchings, then a youth, assisted him. The boat was a ship's yawl, and was moved by a steam-engine turning a screw propeller at the stern. It also had revolving paddles of the modern type at the sides.

At last Fitch ceased the hopeless struggle. In order that he might no longer hear the laughter of his fellow men he went out into the Kentucky wilderness, apart from bickering and jeers, and there, in a quiet and unobtrusive way made an end of his troubled life.[4] Yet even amid the primeval woods, during the few final months, his mind and fingers were busy with the work which had engrossed him. He built of brass a strange contrivance some three feet long that was found after his death, and is illustrated among these pages. Although it has a smokestack with an elbow at the top, apparently designed with

[1] The French Revolution was in progress.
[2] Reprinted in O'Callaghan's "Documentary History of New York."
[3] The pond was on the present site of the Tombs prison, Center Street.
[4] He saved many small narcotic pills, prescribed singly by a doctor for some trivial ailment, and swallowed them all at once. His death took place in June or July of 1798.

the idea of preventing a downward draught while moving at high speed against the wind,[1] and though the engine rested on a rectangular truck with four solid and flanged wheels,[2] this model of a steam-engine has always been discussed as one for a steamboat mechanism. A St. Louis newspaper[3] of 1854, while the original model was in that city, said:

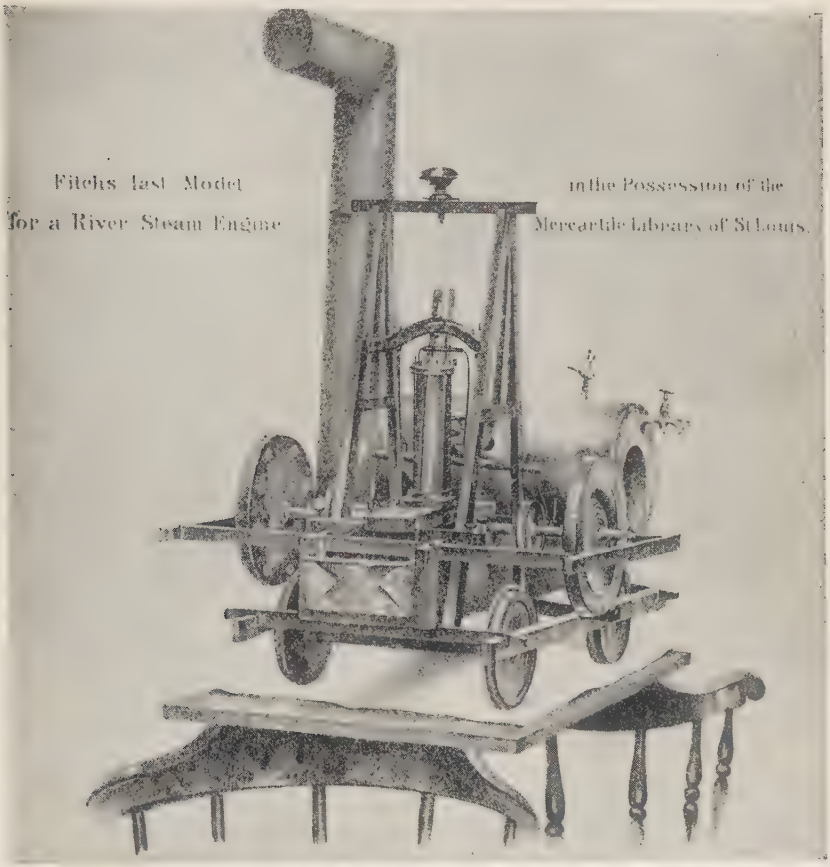
"It was evidently thus arranged for the purpose of exhibiting the power of steam in propelling boats, and was constructed on a railway immersed in a trough of the proper depth for the paddles to strike the water, and when the motion was given, the wheels would guide it along the submerged railway."

The theory here expounded, and since accepted by those who have known of Fitch's last model or seen it, appears questionable when considered in connection with what had already been done by the man who designed and built it. Fitch had not found it necessary, in proving that steam could be used in moving a boat, to drag down the hull by a wheeled truck and keep the whole fabric on a submerged track along which it should move in a straight line. The added weight of truck and wheels, and the friction of wheels on submerged rails would retard the progress of the boat, if motive power was imparted to paddles alone. In practise the laying, maintaining and repairing of such a track would not be possible. River bottoms do not lend themselves to such a method of transportation. In deep water the wooden hull would either float the wheels off the track or else the wheeled underbody would pull the hull down, with unpleasant consequences to crew and passen-

[1] The same idea was suggested for railroad locomotives a half century afterward. When the early lithographer made the picture reproduced in this work he showed the smoke-stack elbow pointed forward! Doubtless the whole stack had been twisted around.

[2] With the wheels inside the truck, as some early railway engines and cars were first constructed.

[3] The "Democrat."



71.—Last known handiwork of Fitch, made in Kentucky a short time before his death, in 1798. The model of a steam-engine is of brass and has a truck and flanged wheels to enable it to run on rails. If it operated successfully it was a miniature steam railway locomotive. When in possession of the St. Louis Mercantile Library, in 1854, the model was considered to be that of a steamboat engine.

gers. In short, the suggestion that the model under consideration was designed as a practical appliance to move a floating steamboat apparently reduces itself to an absurdity.

Fitch, by successive steps covering years of time, had

created the steamboat out of a mental vision. He had built such a craft and operated it in regular advertised traffic for months at a stretch, covering a thousand miles or more at the rate of from six to eight miles an hour. He had solved that particular problem, and his whole habit of mind while engaged in his work had always exhibited a steady process of progression toward something a little better and more practical. Yet his last thoughts regarding the application of steam power to travel and transportation found their expression in an engine resting on a rectangular truck and moving over rails on four flanged wheels. He had said:

"Neither do I conceive that all the Improvements that are yet to be made on steam are to be done on the water." It is perhaps possible to believe that he took the one last forward step; that he saw the railroad of the future just as he had seen the steamboat, and in the American wilderness, in 1798, built in miniature the first free moving, railway steam locomotive created by the brain and hand of man. The model was in existence a few years ago, and if it still remains intact a competent examination and test of it under its own power on a railway track might finally determine the purpose for which it was built.

The many letters and utterances of Fitch show he had a clear comprehension of the service he had performed, and that his chief impulse was the accomplishment of his task for "the benefit of our Empire." While his fellow men, still dazed at the discovery of their own independence, stood looking backward into the past like a boy who gazes awestruck into the chasm he has leaped, Fitch looked into the coming years and saw what they were yet to do. But his arguments, pleadings and

SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

ORIGIN

OF

STEAM BOATS,

WRITTEN IN 1810,

AND NOW COMMITTED TO THE PRESS

By W. THORNTON,

Of the City of Washington.

ALBANY:

PRINTED BY E. AND E. HOSFORD, STATE-STREET.

1818.

72.—Early literature relating to travel in America. Title page of Thornton's pamphlet in description of Fitch's boats. Thornton was a member of Fitch's company in Philadelphia, when the vessels were built and operated.

demonstrations were necessarily without effect. The collective popular opinion of a newly created state resembles in many ways the mentality of an individual in the early period of self-consciousness. Some things are beyond its comprehension.

A knowledge of what Fitch did has been easy of access. The contemporary records, some of which are here reproduced, have been open for men to read. Yet it has been the custom to dismiss him, in discussing the development of steam travel in America, by saying he lived before his time. The expression is a familiar one, often adopted by a people for application to such a case in an effort to rid themselves of responsibility and place the blame where they wish it might belong — on the man who had presumption to do things his contemporaries did not appreciate. But the splendor of inspiration and original creation is not dimmed by such an artifice. No man is born before his time, for the days in which he lives belong to him, and are the ones that witness the performance of his labor. If what he offers is not accepted by his fellow men it is not because he is before his time, but because they refuse to walk beside him and accept the years of advancement that lie within his gift. The greater loss is theirs; not his. So it was in this case, and so passes the last individual figure of the story. Fitch was a genius cursed with a knowledge of the greatness of his own derided achievement. There can be no fate more sad than that.

It is idle to consider what would have happened if men of power had fought with one another for the privilege of aiding him and enriching themselves, as would be the case in like circumstance to-day. Had that thing happened the whole country east of the Mississippi would probably have been overrun by the aid of steam some

twenty or twenty-five years before it was conquered in that way, with resultant consequences on all social and economic progress, both in America and the world, which forbid speculation. Fitch's method of travel was laughed aside, but did not die. It slept.

CHAPTER XVI

THE AGE OF THE FLATBOAT, ARK AND KEEL-BOAT BEGINS — EFFECT OF THE OPENING OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY — A MILLION PEOPLE DRIFT THROUGH THE INTERIOR — LIFE ON THE FLATBOATS — CONTRASTS OF TRAGEDY AND REVEL — DESCRIPTIONS AND USES OF THE VARIOUS CRAFT BY WHICH THE FIRST GENERAL TRAVEL TO THE OHIO COUNTRY AND MIDDLE WEST WAS ACCOMPLISHED

THE era of the flatboat, ark and keel-boat had already begun. With the passage of the Northwest Ordinance by the Congress of the Confederation in 1787 the territory now included in the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin was thrown open to settlement, and a general public interest in the immense region beyond the mountains and the Ohio River swept through the original seacoast colonies. Hundreds of thousands of the population, to which aggregate each state contributed a share, decided to journey to the western country and set up new homes in the forest. Preparations for the migration affected every locality of the East. That part of the interior toward which the eyes of the coast inhabitants were now turned was unknown in its details to the bulk of the people, though a knowledge of its essential characteristics and the best ways of getting there had been spread through the occupied areas by means of tales brought back by numerous frontier travel-

73.—River travel before the age of steamboats. The covered keel-boat, or barge, was for many years the principal river craft for quick journeys, especially up-stream. Barges often had sleeping bunks, but passengers carried their own bedding. The captain blew a horn at starting time. This and the illustrations to No. 90, inclusive, show the various types of drifting and man-propelled boats used from about 1788 until after the general introduction of steamboats, and indicate the manner in which hundreds of thousands floated down the Ohio and Mississippi to settle in the interior.

lers. The country was known to be densely wooded, and very fertile after the forest had been swept away. It could most easily be reached by the Ohio River, which traversed the border of the region for nearly a thousand miles and whose numerous tributaries furnished routes through the southern part of the inviting lands for considerable distances. The northern section of the territory affected by the Ordinance was all but unknown. It was not considered at the beginning of the first general westward rush of the people, because it could not be penetrated. The difficulties and dangers of such an attempt were too great to be wisely undertaken.

A journey to the head waters of the Ohio, at the time

the Confederation established an organized government for the so-called Northwest Territory, no longer presented peril to human life and could be made, in good weather, without extreme hardship. The wagon roads of settled sections in the East, together with the system of pack-train trails and wilderness roads leading toward the frontier from the domain of busier highways, constituted available paths to the upper Ohio region from every part of the Atlantic coast between Connecticut and Virginia. Things were getting easier. The one human quality essential in the successful performance of the trip from the seaboard to the Ohio was a physical capacity for enduring exposure and hard work during a period of from two to five weeks. All that was required after vehicular roads were left behind was the organization of a pack-train, and in due course of time the migrating bands — or such part of them as did not succumb to illness or accident on the way — climbed the last hill and caught a glimpse, in the distance, of the fabled and beautiful river thenceforward to bear them toward new lives and habitations.

Arriving at Redstone, Pittsburgh, or whatever other settlement was the goal of their overland travel, the westward movers established themselves in camp for a period of recuperation, and the men folk of the party set about the work of obtaining transportation facilities suitable for their future needs. The boats were sometimes bought ready built, but were more often constructed by the travellers themselves[1] from trees felled on the spot.

The curious craft destined to play a large part for a generation in the travel movement which populated the

[1] Especially in the early stages of the westward movement by water. After the first year or two many axmen and carpenters made a regular business of building boats and keeping them in stock at every river town.

Ohio and upper Mississippi valleys were of several types. Throughout thirty or forty years they were extensively used, and within that period probably a million people lived in them for weeks at a time, during journeys of from three hundred to two thousand miles. They were built by tens of thousands, yet not one of them remains as

74.—The flatboat, Ohio-boat or Kentucky-boat. Most common type of vehicle for river travel during the population movements that led to the permanent occupation of the Mississippi valley by the whites. It was entirely enclosed and was, in fact, a floating house. Such a boat was seldom pulled against a current.

a memorial of the vehicles which bore so important a share in the nation's expansion. Roman galleys and ships of the early Norsemen have been found for modern eyes to look upon, but there is small chance for future Americans ever to see an example of the quaint boats into which men, women, children, horses, pigs, chickens, cows, dogs,

kegs of powder, dishes, furniture, boxes of provisions and farm implements were all loaded and jumbled together, to float down the rivers to somewhere. They resembled — those unwieldy vessels of such a short time ago — a mixture of log cabin, fort, floating barnyard and country grocery. At night, as they drifted on the dark waters, their loopholes often spurted jets of rifle fire, while women loaded the hot rifles of the men in the flickering light of pine knots held by silent children, and watched for the answering shots of red enemies through the mist that hid them. By day, on a more kindly voyage, some backwoods genius on the cabin roof would touch the resin to his fiddle-bow and send the wild strains of a hoe-down to the wooded shores and back again, while the family mule gave vent to his emotions in a loud heehaw, the pigs squealed, the children shouted and danced to the melody of the combined orchestra, and the women rolled up the bedding, milked the cow, hung out the wash and killed a few chickens for dinner.[1] Perhaps no other craft that ever moved on land or sea provided such episodes and contrasts, such diverse pictures of tragedy and revel, as did the flatboats in which the vast host of floating pilgrims travelled the interior rivers of America from about 1788 until as late a date as 1840.[2]

It is desirable at this point to refer to a certain feature of the narrative mentioned at its beginning — the chronological and geographical overlapping of periods of travel movement, and the duplication of vehicle epochs as new territory toward the west came under the sway of the

[1] A couple of the older boys would very likely be catching fish at the same time.

[2] Although a noticeable part of the westward migration to the Ohio and Mississippi valleys was carried on by means of flatboats until the last named date, that sort of travelling began to decline swiftly soon after the year 1830. The rapid multiplication of steamboats caused the change. Flatboats would have disappeared still earlier had not the flimsy character of western steamboats during the first twenty years of their history made the use of them so dangerous.

75.—A helmsman on a flatboat, shouting a warning to some one at the other end of the vessel, or to a near-by boat. Sketch by Joshua Shaw.

white race. In the conquest of a continent so large, requiring a period of nearly two and a half centuries for its completion, it was inevitable that the earlier stages of the process should be repeated in regions successively invaded. This was most noticeable during the generations before inventive genius and mechanical appliances made their appearance as predominant elements in the problem, and was to some extent true with regard to the use of large timber boats.

But every method of conveyance arose to its ascendency at one time or another, and each one—even if it played a minor part either before or after the period of its especial importance — must be chiefly considered with relation to the time and events of its greatest prominence. The long historical sequence of human endeavors that were consciously aimed toward better methods of progress over the land, and were unconsciously directed toward wider territorial dominion, new social conditions and national unity, resembled the march of an army. The temporary use of some means of locomotion outside of its normal place in the column of events was but the work of a scouting party, not to be unduly exalted in a chronicle of the main campaign. Previous generations could not see the whole process as we may, nor observe the relationships and effects of its various stages, for they were too close to it; they were themselves engaged in a work now completed.

Still another phase of the development of travel facilities that attracts attention in any consideration of their influence is the unusual manner by which, as a rule, they have advanced toward greater efficiency. Successive early improvements in transportation are not only classifiable by groups, but are perhaps unlike the correspond-

ing steps of any other economic process because, in a sense, they have nearly always progressed backward. Broadly speaking, there have thus far been four general phases of travel history in America, to be roughly defined as follows:

First Period: During which all travel was performed,

76.—Travellers on top of a flatboat. During a long voyage, lasting for weeks or months, the principal diversions of the emigrants were story telling, singing, and dancing on the upper deck to the accompaniment of the universal fiddle. A ladder or flight of steps led down into the interior.

when possible, through the utilization of natural waterways and in the most primitive craft.

Second Period: Distinguished by the extensive use of prior overland routes—the Indian trails—and the creation of other land roads by white men.

Third Period: Characterized by the elaboration of earlier vehicles for both land and water travel; such con-

veyances being moved either by manual labor, animals, the wind, or natural water currents.

Fourth Period: In which both boats and land vehicles, of types already existing, were for the first time propelled by mechanical power generated within the conveyances themselves. During this cycle, which still prevails, the boats and land carriages have gradually been increased in size and altered in form.

No sharply defined lines emphasized these epochs, for there have been times when all of them have prevailed at once, though in widely separated parts of the land. Until very recent days it has almost always been the case that at least two of the periods existed simultaneously somewhere within the limits of the country, either in the same locality while earlier conditions were giving way to later ones, or in adjacent regions. But every section of the continent has witnessed the arrival and progress of all four eras in some degree at least, always in the procession here indicated and in orderly advancement from the East toward the West.

The conditions that have so often resulted in the betterment of travel facilities by means of a retrogressive method are due to a relation which has necessarily prevailed between vehicles themselves and the roadways on which they move. No means of travel can attain its utmost value unless the conveyance and its highway, of whatever sort, are mutually fitted for one another to the greatest possible degree. But since mankind cannot devise or perfect a path for what does not exist, or else has no inducement to do so, it has generally happened that a new transportation conveyance has appeared before there was a fit road for it.

A visible improvement has often waited, either in

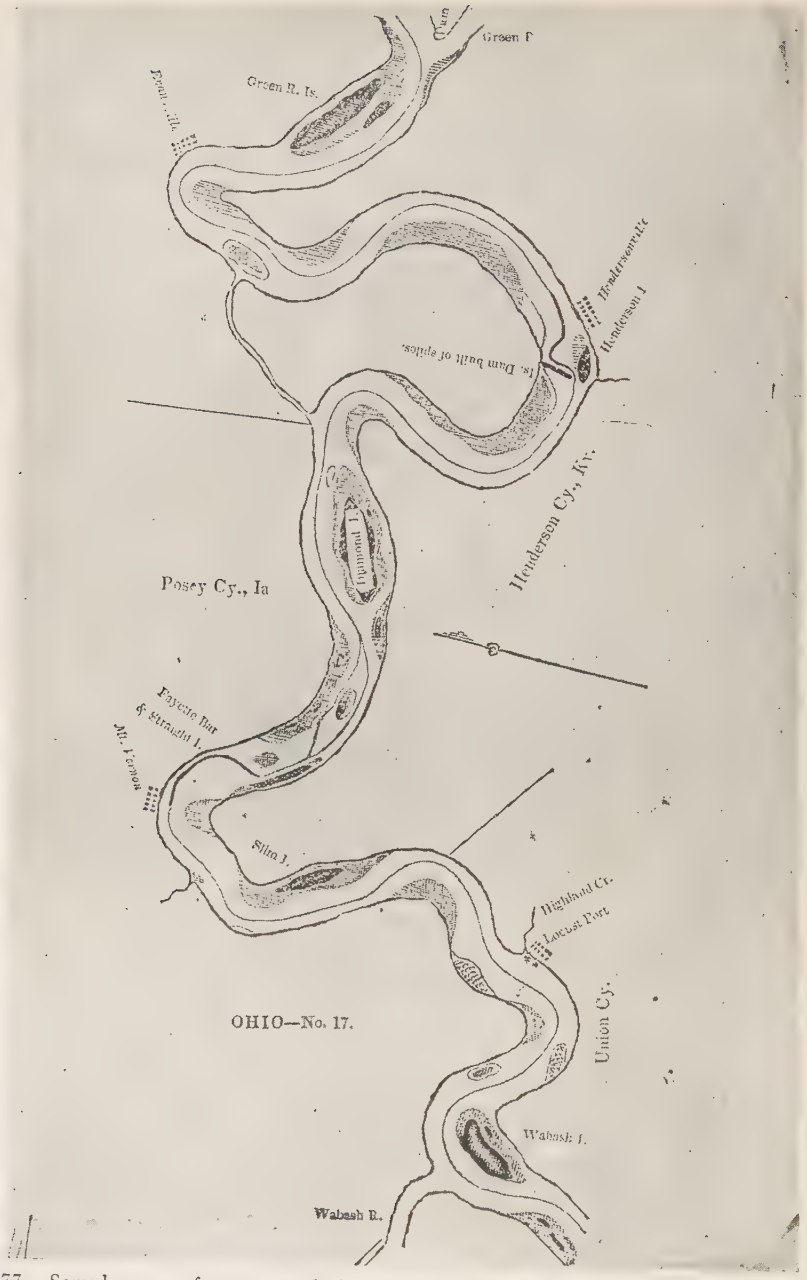
actual disuse or limited utility, until the generation in which it appeared turned back and perfected some earlier feature of the existing transportation system, or else added another to it, in order to apply successfully and widely the new device to public need.[1]

The appearance of wheeled vehicles forced the transformation of tote-paths and pack-train routes into wagon roads, and as fast as dirt highways were built the wagons multiplied and compelled still farther extension of such avenues of travel. The early stage-coaches showed the necessity of abandoning dirt roads in favor of turnpikes with a permanent stone surface, and resulted in their creation. The general introduction of steamboats on the interior waterways forced governmental control and improvement of the rivers in order that their safe navigation, not previously possible, might be obtained. Railway locomotives were to be of limited value and slight use until proper road beds, after long experiment, could be made for them. And to-day the same sort of progress is being forced by motor-cars. They constitute an impulse compelling the tardy creation of improved highways worthy of the name, and which will be limited only by the nation's boundaries.

While the years from about 1788 to 1830 were the ones witnessing the ascendency of big, unwieldy timber boats as travel vehicles on the interior rivers of the country, it is nevertheless true that similar craft had for a long time been a familiar means of human transport on several widely separated streams in the old colonies.[2] It

[1] The canal building period was a confirmation of the common rule of progress rather than a contradiction of it. It is true that in the creation of a canal the track is made before the vehicle known as a canal boat appears, but the making of a canal is nothing but the construction of an artificial river in which the roadway is a safe, unobstructed track for conveyances — water craft — that already exist. And in its early form the canal-boat was only a modified type of a certain kind of river vessel.

[2] Perhaps the earliest reference to such vessel is to be found in Thomas Budd's "Account" of Pennsylvania and New Jersey: 1685.



77.—Sample page from one of the chart-books used by a flatboat family for guidance while descending the Ohio or Mississippi. The continuous line indicates the best course for a flatboat on the Ohio between Evansville, Indiana, and the mouth of the Wabash. From Cummings' "Western Pilot."

therefore happened that when the general tide of westward travel began immediately after 1787, the various sorts of existing eastern river vessels were extensively in-

Directions for Map No. 17.—Ohio River.		
Green River, left side.	2	798
Channel near the opposite shore. At a middling stage of water keep wel to the right to avoid the rocks below its mouth.		
Green River Islands, (channel to the left.)		
In sight of Green river below. The large one is hardly visible; the chute to the left is nearly grown over with timber. The other lies in the middle of the river along side of the large one, and about a mile below its head. In low water you must run the point of the bar that makes up from the head of the island in the middle of the river, middling close to avoid a shore bar on the left, then keep down the left hand bend until near the point opposite Evansville, then keep near the middle until opposite the head of dry bar under the point on the left, then go in towards it, then turn and go over towards the steam-mill, below the town.		
EVANSVILLE, right side.	8½	806½
Pigeon Creek, right side.	1	807½
When one an a half miles below Pigeon, at the point and rocks on the right, go over to the left, keep down near the left shore to the point on the left; then go into the middle of the river, keep it around the point and bear on the left to avoid some rocks and logs in the bend on the right, under water. When up with the right hand point make a long crossing to within 200 yards of the left shore opposite a house on your left and big bar on your right, then straighten down; don't go near the shore until you get 300 yards further down, then keep nearest that shore until you get to		
HENDERSONVILLE, left side.	10	817½

78.—Text printed in Cummings' "Western Pilot" to accompany the particular chart shown in the preceding illustration. Similarly explicit directions were given, both by illustration and text, for navigating each mile of the river's course.

troduced on the Mississippi system of waters, together with certain modifications of them. A few new forms better suited to the larger streams and greater dangers of

[1] Eastern emigrants to the West, on reaching the Ohio, at first built the sort of boats with which they were most familiar

western navigation also appeared. One result of the invasion of the interior by floating domestic establishments of the period was a confusion of the names by which such craft were known in different localities. This did not matter at the time, for everybody then understood the differences or similarities between a broadhorn, a keelboat, a Durham boat and an ark, as well as a twentieth century man knows what is meant by street-car, automobile, subway or aeroplane. But the early travellers who left accounts of the first overrunning of the West never wrote explanatory descriptions designed for the enlightenment of those who, in the future, might want to find out just how the people undertook their long journeys. When one of them had occasion for mentioning a boat he referred to it by a name common to one neighborhood or river, omitting to say that the same identical sort of craft, or a type very similar, was known elsewhere by a different name. Nor did they describe the floating homes of the moving population in careful detail. Only by the comparison of various narratives and the piecing together of numerous references can the extensive river travel of the early West, as carried on for about forty years, be seen in substance as it was. Any description of it must be a composite picture, a mosaic made of many fragments joined as best they may be, with many details gone.

A list of the several kinds of non-mechanical river boats used during the days when water travel by means of them was at its climax, together with a short description of each and mention of its origin and utility will illuminate the time and its habits. Such a catalogue may consequently be given.

The most simple of the boats still in use for river travel was the log canoe. It was employed by one or two

men, particularly when the need of speed became urgent, and could be bought for three dollars or less.

A pirogue[1] was a very large canoe, often forty or fifty feet long and six or eight feet wide, capable of carrying a family and several tons of household goods. It was sometimes employed after danger from Indians had ceased, but vulnerability to attack made it unpopular for long trips on western streams in the early part of the white invasion. The pirogue cost from five to twenty dollars, according to size.

The skiff was a wide, flat-bottomed affair, made of planks, similar to the small pleasure boat bearing the same name to-day. It was occasionally used by parties of two or three on long trips, but was most commonly employed as an attendant on the big boats for use in carrying their occupants to shore when necessary. The value of a skiff was about five dollars.

A batteau was a very big skiff that bore to its smaller brother the same relation a pirogue held to a canoe. The batteau could carry a family, cost from twenty to fifty dollars, and was moved down-stream by several pairs of long oars called sweeps. Another sweep served as rudder. On up-stream trips it was propelled by poles.

The keel-boat[2] received its name because it had at the bottom, and extending for its whole length, a heavy timber about four inches wide and equally thick. The timber was so placed to take the shock of a collision with any submerged obstruction. Stout planks served in constructing the hull. It was usually from forty to seventy-five feet long, from seven to nine feet wide, and carried a mast and sails. One steersman and two men at the sweeps could

[1] Sometimes spelled peroque or perrogue. Likewise of Indian origin.
[2] It developed from the batteau. The early illustration of boats on the Mohawk River gives a good idea of the appearance of one type of keel-boat.

navigate the keel-boat down-stream, but its progress against the current was effected by the wind or the labor of men at setting-poles. The cost of such a craft was from $2.50 to $3.00 for each foot of its length. Keel-boats were extensively used on every navigable stream in the country. They originated in the East, probably by independent development in several localities, and gradually assumed certain standard sizes and shapes. Introduced on western waters at the outset of the great migration which began in 1788, they were long employed there both in their original form and with modifications to be related in connection with the barge and Ohio packet-boats.[1]

Mohawk boats were the sort of keel-boats used on that river, or any similarly shallow stream.

Schenectady boats were Mohawk keel-boats. Both were names used in New York.

The Durham boat was a keel-boat shaped much like an Indian bark canoe, and it acquired its name from a celebrated eastern builder of river vessels. He was Robert Durham, of Pennsylvania, who began turning out his product about the year 1750 for use on the Delaware River, where the craft became very popular. A description of them[2] reads:

"Durham boats were 60 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 2 feet deep, and when laden with 15 tons drew 20 inches of water. The stern and bow were sharp, on which were erected small decks, while a running board extended the whole length of the boat on each side.[3] They carried a mast with two sails, and were manned by a crew of five men, one steering, and four pushing forward with setting-poles, two being on each side."

The ark was a type of boat originating either on the Susquehanna or Delaware River. After Indian warfare

[1] The keel-boat was also the immediate ancestor of the canal boat.
[2] From Pearce's "Annals of Luzerne."
[3] Running boards were a necessary feature of all keel-boats. On these long, narrow platforms the pole-men walked while they pushed.

79.—Another group of travellers smoking and telling stories on a flat-boat. Showing the knee-breeches, hunting-shirt, moccasins, coon-skin cap and long clay pipes of the period; also, a small hatch leading down into the boat. Sketch by Joshua Shaw.

ceased in the West the ark was very popular on the Ohio, Mississippi and all other streams in that part of the country. It was usually from seventy-five to a hundred feet long, fifteen to twenty feet wide and from three to five feet deep. Heavy timbers and planks were necessary for its construction, and the lumber necessary in building one cost about a hundred dollars. The ark had vertical bulwarks all around, and both bow and stern ended in a broad V-shaped point. So huge and unwieldy was the vessel that it was much at the mercy of the current, and only a general guidance could be given to it by side sweeps and steering. The steering oar was a wide sweep about forty feet long, requiring the strength of two men for its manipulation. An ark could never go up-stream. On reaching its destination it was sold for what the timber would bring — ten to twenty-five dollars — or else broken up for metamorphosis into a cabin and furniture. On western waters the ark usually had a wooden house for the family near one end, and an enclosure at the other for the live stock. It was never roofed entirely over, and, because of its inability for defense, was not widely adopted until the country was tranquil and travelling was freed from the incidents of warfare.

A Susquehanna boat was an ark used on that stream.

The flatboat was the standard water vehicle for travelling families, and was a creation of the Ohio River valley. In size it varied greatly, each craft being originally built or bought in accordance with the needs of the party intending to occupy it. Due consideration was given, in its construction, to the nature of the stream or streams to be navigated, the length of the trip, the purpose to which the timber was to be put at the end of the voyage, and probability of attack by hostile natives. It was never

80.—The broadhorn was an Ohio or Mississippi family flatboat with three steering oars, two of which stuck out, like huge horns, from the sides of the structure. The flag was exceptional.

less than twenty feet long by ten feet in width, and sometimes developed into a huge floating domicile sixty feet in length and eighteen or twenty feet wide. The hull of such a boat was made of big square timbers of hard wood, and it drew from a foot to two and a half feet of water when full laden. Its timber hull rose, under like conditions, three or four feet above the surface of the river — sometimes even more — thus making it an oaken fort with sides often eight or ten inches thick and impervious to rifle fire.

Upright timbers four feet high and four or five inches thick were set on top of the hull, and the whole was then enclosed, like a house, with heavy planks. A similar roof

completed the structure, which contained a barricaded entrance, loopholes, a window or two and a trap-door for upward egress. The flatboat floated at the mercy of the current, and was steered by a big sweep as long as the vessel itself. A small craft of the sort required the attention of three men. Its cost was about three or four dollars for each foot of length. The top was occasionally — but not often — built in a slightly arched form, and after the time of Indian hostilities had ceased the live stock was kept out-of-doors, in an open yard added to one end of the boat. The family wash was hung out to dry on the roof, and sometimes a fond parent would also fence in a space on the upper deck to serve as a playground for the children.

The Kentucky boat was a small or medium-sized water conveyance like the one just described. The name was given to such as were bound for the Kentucky region or lower Ohio.

New Orleans boats were big flatboats destined for the lower Mississippi.

A broadhorn was a similar craft whose movements were habitually regulated, as far as possible, by two big sweeps that projected like horns from each side of the boat. Vessels of the flatboat type rarely proceeded up-stream.

The barge was built somewhat after the style of a ship's long-boat, and closely resembled the keel-boat previously discussed. It was from thirty to seventy feet long, seven to twelve feet in width, and carried a mast, sails and rudder. Its down-stream progress was accelerated either by the wind or by four of the crew who wielded long oars. When going up a river the motive power was supplied by numerous men who used the familiar iron-tipped poles.

Barges cost about five dollars for each foot of length, and — with keel-boats — were the most rapid of all conveyances for water travel. They were used by business men whose time was valuable, by land speculators and government officials. Under ordinary circumstances they could make from four to five miles an hour with the current, and when going in the contrary direction attained a speed of about two miles an hour.[1]

Barges had covered enclosures for passengers. Sometimes the protection thus given was in the shape of a house built in the center of the boat, supported by timbers at its four corners and surmounted by a gable roof. At other times[2] the vessel was almost completely covered by a flat-topped superstructure of bullet-proof construction containing loopholes and even embrasures for the firing of small cannon. During troublous times the barge was anchored at night and sentries were posted.[3]

The Ohio packet-boat was a magnified barge, or keel-boat. In size it ranged from seventy-five to a hundred feet long by fifteen or twenty feet wide, with the passenger cabin usually in the stern. The steersman stood on the cabin roof. It had a mast and sails, was equipped with many pole-men, and on occasion the crew even went ashore and towed the boat by means of a long rope. Such packets, carrying both passengers and freight, plied regularly between Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and Louisville before the beginning of the steamboat era in the West. By travelling on a swift packet-boat a man could go from Cincinnati to Pittsburgh and back again in a month, and even have a day or so to devote to business before starting on the return trip.

[1] Even more if the wind was from a favorable quarter.
[2] Especially during periods when trouble with the Indians was feared.
[3] All river craft carried anchors, and night navigation on western rivers was not usually attempted until about 1800.

CHAPTER XVII

A RIVER JOURNEY THAT ENDED IN TRAGEDY — MANY VOYAGERS IGNORANT OF WILDERNESS EXPEDIENTS — THE WESTERN BOATMEN — THEIR APPEARANCE, HABITS AND SPEECH — FURNISHINGS OF A FLATBOAT — DANGERS OF NAVIGATION — HUMAN VULTURES — FIRST PERIODIC BOAT TRAFFIC — OHIO PACKETS — THE ADMIRAL OF A FLOATING DEPARTMENT STORE — TIME CONSUMED ON TRIPS — END OF THE FLATBOAT PERIOD

NO extensive accounts exist by which the amount of flatboat travel on western rivers from about 1788 until its final disappearance can be approximately reckoned. It began at a still earlier date, when a journey of the sort was folly and its consequences almost sure disaster. One of the first important organized trips of the sort was made by about two hundred and fifty people then living on the upper waters of the Tennessee, who had decided to remove to a locality on the Cumberland River in North Carolina. They proceeded by water in order to avoid the shorter but more laborious overland march, and started in the winter of 1779-1780.

Thirty boats — probably keel-boats or batteaux — were built to carry the people, and the voyagers did not reach their destination until April 24th of 1780, after enduring much hardship. Their new home was separated from the nearest neighbors by more than two hundred

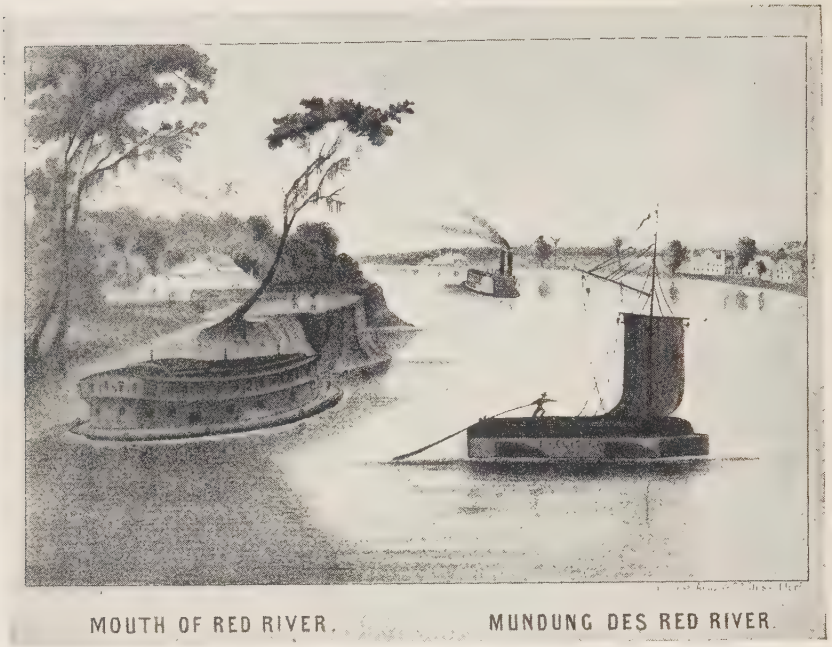
81.—A little flatboat, equipped with a sail, used for down-stream journeys on some small and shallow rivers of the East.

miles of wilderness, and so out of touch with the world did the self-exiled party find itself that its members organized a little republic, similar to the one of Wautaga, and also based on a written document. Disease, the Indians and social isolation proved fatal to the venture so bravely yet foolishly begun.[1] But twenty of the original party remained in the settlement in 1792, and of those twenty only one is credited by tradition with a natural death.

About three hundred Kentucky boats are believed to have passed down the Ohio during the year of 1780,[2] and

[1] Clannish migrations, limited to one party however large, have not generally been successful in any period or country, and have not had a lasting influence on the occupied territory. All permanently important migrations have originated in a widely distributed public interest prior to the movement itself, and the first travellers in such cases have carried with them a confidence or certainty that others were to follow. That feeling of support has often been more valuable than mere numbers in sustaining pioneers in a new country.

[2] Those who made the trip before 1788 were bound for Kentucky.



82.—An Orleans or Mississippi boat. Constructed on the lines of the covered Ohio boat, but larger and heavier. Used in descending the Mississippi, and often equipped with a sail. From a drawing by the American artist, Henry Lewis.

a small but increasing flow of travel continued westward on the river thereafter until 1788. Then came the onrush of a whole people; the first national surge of the tide destined to continue under many different aspects of movement, but always due to similar impulses and purposes, until the oceans were united. The people did not then, nor for long afterward, have the shores of the Pacific as their avowed objective. What they wanted was new homes, wealth, and soil over which they could become the individual proprietors. Impelled onward by those aspirations they made their periodic advances, using each time, as an aid to their westward progress, the transporta-

tion method best fitted for the journey immediately at hand. This time they built boats; floated with the currents of the rivers; pushed themselves along by poles; lifted sails to catch the breezes; pulled themselves onward by ropes. Any way served as long as they made visible progress over the waters bearing them into the new country. And as they moved they fought, sang, fished, swore dreadful oaths, quarrelled among themselves, aided one another when in peril or distress, brought new children into the world, and buried their dead in haste that they might not lose an hour of the precious daylight or a favoring wind.

By the later part of the year 1788 a human flood was upborne by the flood beneath. Flotillas of fantastic craft dotted the surface of the winding rivers. New settlements sprang up along the banks of the Ohio,[1] and all those scenes attendant on the evolution of a wilderness frontier into a region suffering its first acute attack of civilization were again in progress of repetition.[2]

Practically all the invaders who so suddenly poured over the mountains and launched themselves headlong into extensive voyages on the Ohio and Mississippi systems of rivers were lacking in knowledge of the country through which they were to journey. Those who came from cities and towns of the East were also ignorant of the many expedients by which wilderness life, especially on a river trip, could be made more safe and easy. As a consequence they sought advice and aid before embarking, and

[1] Cincinnati and Marietta were founded in 1788. Cincinnati, then called Losantiville, at once became the most important western outpost, and its big timber fortification was named Fort Washington. The town was afterward a headquarters for all the white men's campaigns against the Indians until the natives gave up their struggle.

[2] The line where primitive races and civilization meet in final contest for supremacy is distinguished for a time by a display of the worst qualities of both those states of society. The more highly cultured combatants lapse from the standard elsewhere slowly attained and, as a class, resort to many of the cruder methods which they are avowedly seeking to eliminate.

generally made arrangements by which several flatboats were to travel together as a little fleet. The head of the family or party would also, if possible, hire a frontiersman to go with the boat and take charge of its navigation. Through those conditions there was created a class of men known as western boatmen, who became familiar with all the vagaries of the rivers and fertile in every device that

83.—Mississippi flatboat with superstructure of rough lumber. Craft of this sort were used by families which intended to use the lumber for house building after reaching their destinations.

might be helpful in an emergency. The professional boatman of the West spent years in travelling down the streams and back again, and became one of the most interesting figures of frontier life the needs of the country have ever produced.

He was of the restless type that in every period of American development has done the unusual and dangerous thing just for the love of doing it; who has never been satisfied unless each new day brought some unexpected event; who has only been happy when he could always keep moving. He was an epicure of excitement. Work no other man could do was his one luxury. In physical make-up the typical boatman was tall, thin and sinewy. His immobile face was tanned to a dark brown,

and from above high cheek-bones and a long nose two dull gray eyes gazed blankly. In his normal state he was silently waiting for something to happen, knowing quite well it certainly would. When the bomb of circumstance exploded the human creature was on that dot of time transformed into a combination of rubber ball, wildcat and shrieking maniac, all controlled by instantaneous perception and exact calculation. After the tumult he subsided again into his listless lethargy of waiting, the monotony being endured by chewing tobacco and illustrating the marvelous accuracy with which he could propel a stream of its juice for any distance up to fifteen feet.[1]

The costume he wore was as picturesque as his personality, and in essential features was so widely adopted as to be almost a uniform. It consisted of a bright red flannel shirt covered by a loose blue coat — called a jerkin — that reached only to his hips, and coarse brown trousers of linsey-woolsey. His head covering was a cap of untanned skin, often with the fur side out; the universal moccasins clad his feet, and from a leather belt hung his hunting-knife and tobacco pouch.

Still a third distinguishing feature of the professional flatboatman was his iridescent vocabulary. As was the case with all Americans of the age he spoke in a ceaseless series of metaphors, similes and comparisons. Everything was described, whether the thing discussed was an inanimate object or human action, by likening it to something else. And, as was the fact through all classes of frontier people, he colored his discourse with references revealing his own occupation. In any miscellaneous backwoods assemblage of those years an expert in native speech could

[1] Boatmen, and many other men of the time, prided themselves on this accomplishment, and often made wagers on hitting a knot-hole or a fly.

have correctly told the kind of work done by most of the men in the gathering simply by listening to their talk for half an hour. When a boatman wanted to say that some act had been performed with celerity he declared it had happened "quicker nor a alligator can chaw a puppy." To be silent, in his phraseology, was to be "dumb as a dead nigger in a mud-hole." If he warned a companion to run he did it by shouting "Start yer trotters." In referring to strangulation, either legal or accidental, he said the victim "choked to death like a catfish on a sand-bank." A difficult thing to do was "harder nor climbin' a peeled saplin', heels uppard." To move very swiftly was to "travel like a nigger in a thunder-storm." And when the crisis for which he was ever waiting suddenly came he would scream "Hell's a-snortin'," and became a blur of arms, legs and profanity.

Guided and helped by men like these the emigrant families travelled down the rivers and absorbed useful knowledge on the way. The routine of daily life on a flatboat did not differ much, except in the actual work of navigation, from that of the cabins on land. At one end of the boat was a large space often called the parlor, or sitting-room, where the travellers ate their meals and the children romped between times. It was furnished with chairs, a table, a looking-glass, and such other articles as the women needed for their work. The kitchen was adjoining. A stove was set up there, and its pipe projected through the roof. A narrow passageway extended down the center of the boat for a considerable part of its length. In front the hall opened into the parlor, and on each side of it were several small bedrooms. At the rear of the boat was another large compartment for the storage of provisions, furniture and agricultural im-

84.—The ark was a big, cumbersome, wide flatboat, and as built in the East sometimes had V-shaped ends. It was extensively used on the Connecticut, Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers, and later introduced on the Ohio and other interior streams. It could not prevail against a current. Arks were not roofed over, but had little houses amidship. Showing Susquehanna arks that survived until the canal period.

plements, and still farther astern was the abode of the live stock. The rooms in those parts of the craft devoted to the use of the family were created, as a rule, by partitions of linsey-woolsey or chintz cloth that sometimes flared up from contact with a candle or pine knot and left no partitions at all. In more elaborate boats some rooms were divided by thin wooden walls. The enclosure for horses, pigs, chickens or other farm animals on board was separated from the rest of the space by a barrier of planks. Such were the general arrangements of a covered Kentucky boat.

The ark bore less resemblance to a land habitation in its internal arrangements. A wooden house was often

built on it near one end,[1] the farmyard was fenced in at the other, and miscellaneous non-perishable goods, such as wagons, plows and furniture were distributed throughout the rest of the space in order to keep an even keel.

The navigation of the Ohio and "Massasip"— as the Mississippi was popularly called — presented a number of dangers to flatboats, only part of which could be avoided by intelligent precautions. From the others there was no escape except through good luck. First among the perils to which the cumbersome craft lay exposed were countless trunks of once floating trees that had become imbedded in the river bottoms, leaving their free ends pointed upward at an angle, like spikes, to stab whatever hit them. Menaces such as these were known by several names, dependent on their actions and position with relation to the surface of the water. A sunken tree moving slowly up and down with a periodic action under the influence of the current was called a "sawyer." The moving end might extend either up stream or down, and its successive brief liftings above the surface were usually separated by an interval of several minutes. But sometimes a log of the sort remained under water for twenty minutes before heaving upward again, and in that time a boat might easily have drifted into view of the place where it lay hid, and have reached the exact danger spot without any possible warning, only to be wrecked by running full tilt against the spear. There could be no predetermined avoidance of such a danger, and many a boat suffered catastrophe or grave damage by an accident of that nature. The vigilant boatman was always watching for the turbulent water which gave warning of a lift-

[1] Neither end of a big timber boat could properly be called the bow, for the current swung it around so that sometimes one extremity and sometimes the other would point down-stream.

ing sawyer just ahead, and a dozen times a day he saved the craft entrusted to his pilotage by desperately throwing his full weight against the sweep.

A sleeping sawyer was one periodically heaving upward, yet not appearing above the surface to give warning of its presence.

A planter was a log so solidly fixed that it never moved. With all three sorts of obstructions an up-stream inclination of the log was of course the most feared, but was decidedly the less usual.

Whenever a little flotilla of emigrant boats slowly drifted around a bend and discovered a strange boat

85.—An Ohio River ark, rectangular in shape. These were very large, and contained not only the travelling family, but its farm equipment, live stock and household goods. Arks were not safe travel vehicles until trouble with the Indians had ceased.

pinned on a planter or sawyer in the current below, the whole squadron would forthwith make for the nearest favorable spot alongshore and come to a halt. Then the men of the party tumbled into the skiffs, carrying axes, saws and other tools, and hurried out to the shipwreck. A few hours of hard work were enough in which to get the wounded boat loose and patch her up again if the damage was not severe, but it often was the case that two or three days were needed for the task. In many instances there was nothing to be done but leave the ark to its fate, and if that was the verdict of the aquatic jury its occupants and all their goods were apportioned among the rescuing armada and the lost boat would be left sticking on the fatal log like a big beetle on a needle.

Mutual help for those in distress was the iron rule of the road, except for the river pirates. They were a small class of white outlaws who roamed the waters to fatten on disaster, and a limping or crippled boat was juicy prey provided it did not contain enough men or firearms to fight them off. They even attacked a moving craft at night on occasion, especially if they had reason to believe its cargo was more than usually valuable. In order to get information respecting the contents of a likely boat, the probable time of its arrival near their headquarters and the number of its male inmates, some of the river pirate gangs kept scouts at important stopping places along the rivers. The spies would obtain all desired knowledge and then hasten on ahead to their comrades below, who were lying in wait for the expected arrival. Men of such stamp were rare, and they lived but briefly after they were taken.

The most notorious group of river outlaws was one with its headquarters at a point on the Ohio about twenty-

five miles below old Shawneetown, in Illinois. The town itself consisted of a few log cabins originally built by the French, standing a hundred rods back from the river and inhabited by a rough population composed of French, Indians, Spaniards, half-breeds and Americans, some of

86.—Manual labor was frequently used, and even horses and oxen were at times employed, in pulling unwieldy craft toward their destinations at the rate of four or five miles a day.

whom were no doubt participants in the robber traffic. On the shore of the river at the point in question and in a little cave in a rock cliff overhanging the water, was the chief gathering place of the pirates when they were about to engage actively in the deeds of their profession. The place became known as Cave-in-Rock, and was long a spot approached with apprehension and passed with

relief. It was the habit of the pirates of Cave-in-Rock to kill those on board a richly laden boat, provided an attack on it could safely be attempted, and then send the craft on to New Orleans or some other town on the lower Mississippi in charge of a crew picked from their own number, who would dispose of its contents and return with the proceeds. There were so many boats descending the river; so many emigrants changing their plans and voyaging to destinations other than they had at first announced; and the means of communication in the new country were so unreliable, that a boat and its occupants could easily vanish from the sight of those most interested in its welfare. When such a thing happened the disappearance was attributed to a disaster of travel, whereas it might have been due, and occasionally was procured, by a more sinister cause.[1]

Other occasional perils to the flatboats were due to falling banks, floating islands, and to stationary masses of trees and driftwood called wooden islands. The banks of the rivers — especially of the Mississippi — were constantly being undermined by the currents and falling into the water in large masses, and therefore no boat guided by experienced rivermen was ever tied up for the night on the side of a stream, below a bend, which felt the full force of a swerving current. Novices in navigation who came to rest at injudicious spots were at times overwhelmed by tons of earth and heavy trees slipping bodily upon them from above. Every river had its well-known danger spots that were to be widely avoided or passed

[1] The whole subject of brigandage on the rivers in early days is shrouded in much mystery. It did exist, but probably not to the degree that later legend has declared or even to such an extent as the travellers of the time themselves believed. Almost the only book dealing exclusively with the question is a fantastic tale entitled, "Mike Fink: A Legend of the Ohio," by Emerson Bennett. In many respects the atmosphere and manners of the time are portrayed by it without undue exaggeration, but the incidents of the story are fanciful.

87.—A sailing barge of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Swiftest means of water conveyance in the interior before the steamboat era began. Used by business men, government officials, military officers and land speculators. After a drawing by the artist, Henry Lewis.

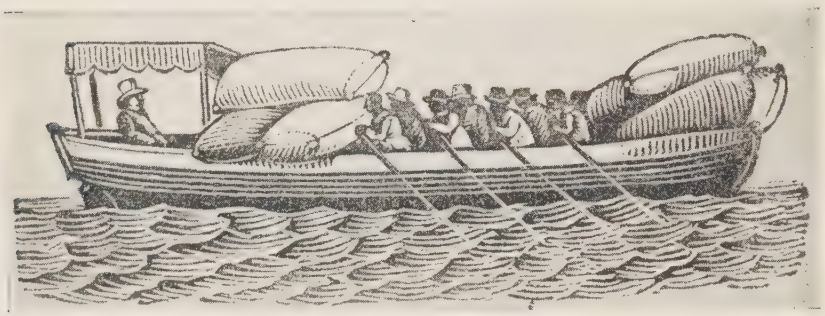
with unusual caution. They frequently received their names from accidents which had happened there, and the mention of such a place to an old boatman was sure to produce a reflective ejection of tobacco juice, followed by some unpleasant and harrowing narrative.[1]

Periodic navigation of rivers by boats did not first appear in the West. That development in the history of human transportation in America took place on the Delaware some time in the second half of the eighteenth century.[2] Keel-boats were the type of craft originally used as regular water conveyances for the public, and the ac-

[1] Names like "Sisters," "Hog Hole," "Sour Beer's Eddy" and "Old Cow" carried their own story.

[2] Probably in the interval between 1750 and 1755.

commodations they afforded were of very scanty extent. All they guaranteed to do was to float and move onward with whomsoever entrusted himself to that means of progress. The boats making regular trips usually started early in the morning like stage wagons, and when the time of departure was near at hand the patron[1] blew loudly on a horn to summon his intending passengers. A man who embarked for passage either carried his own blanket and rolled up in it at night[2] or else got off and



88.—The batteau was a big boat with the lines of a skiff. It was employed by those who were in a hurry, if a barge was not available. By the Philadelphia artist and wood engraver, Henry Robb.

slept in some tavern or neighboring farmhouse, resuming his voyage when the horn again tooted at early dawn. At a later day the Delaware River and other eastern passenger keel-boats were transformed into barges by the addition of house-like structures designed to furnish greater comfort and shelter. With these cabins there also appeared rude sleeping bunks, one above another, and thus developed the first germ of the future sleeping-car. But the traveller still carried his own bedding.

The packet-boats of the Ohio, which furnished the

[1] Captain.
[2] The very earliest regular passenger keel-boats had no covered shelter.

first periodic travel facilities in the interior of the continent, were keel-boats of twenty or thirty tons burden and came into use in the year 1794. They ran regularly thereafter between Cincinnati and Pittsburgh. At the time such packets were introduced the Indians were engaged in their last effort to prevent the westward progress of the white race,[1] and real danger to defenseless boats still existed. As a consequence the packets were stoutly built and heavily armed. An understanding of their character and accommodations can best be obtained through the advertisement printed in Cincinnati[2] to announce the inauguration of the service. It read:

OHIO PACKET BOATS.

"Two boats for the present will start from Cincinnati to Pittsburgh and return to Cincinnati in the following manner, viz.: First boat will leave Cincinnati this morning at eight o'clock, and return to Cincinnati so as to be ready to sail again in four weeks from this date. Second boat will leave Cincinnati on Saturday, the 30th inst., and return as above, and so regularly, each boat performing the voyage to and from Cincinnati to Pittsburgh once in every four weeks. The proprietor of these boats having maturely considered the many inconveniences and dangers incident to the common method hitherto adopted of navigating the Ohio, and being influenced by a love of philanthropy,[3] and a desire of being serviceable to the public, has taken great pains to render the accommodations on board the boat as agreeable and convenient as they could possibly be made. No danger need be apprehended from the enemy, as every person on board will be under cover made proof to rifle balls, and convenient port holes for firing out. Each of the boats is armed with six pieces, carrying a pound ball; also a good number of muskets, and amply supplied with ammunition, strongly manned with choice men, and the master of approved knowledge.

"A separate cabin from that designed for the men is partitioned off in each boat for accommodating the ladies on their passage. Conveniences are constructed on board each boat, so as to render landing unnecessary, as it might at times be attended with danger. Rules and regulations for maintaining order on board, and for the good management of the boats, and a table accurately calculated for the rates of

[1] In the Mississippi valley.
[2] In the "Centinel" newspaper of January 11, 1794.
[3] Quite an early appearance of that beneficent impulse as a motive for business enterprise.

freightage, for passengers, and carriage of letters to and from Cincinnati to Pittsburgh; also, a table of the exact time of the arrival and departure to and from the different places on the Ohio between Cincinnati and Pittsburgh may be seen on board each boat, and at the printing office in Cincinnati. Passengers will be supplied with provisions and liquors of all kinds, of the first quality, at the most reasonable rates possible. Persons desirous of working their passage will be admitted, on finding themselves subject, however, to the same order and directions from the master of the boats as the rest of the working hands of the boat's crew. An office of insurance will be kept at Cincinnati, Limestone, and Pittsburgh, where persons desirous of having their property insured may apply. The rates of insurance will be moderate."

The armed keel-boats took about twelve days to go from Cincinnati to Pittsburgh, stopping at Limestone, Marietta and a few other settlements on the way. They and the similar unarmed craft soon to follow were the best means of moving through the interior until the year 1811, and remained the only reliable up-stream conveyances on the rivers until 1817. But almost all water travel beyond the Alleghany Mountains was in the opposite direction — down-stream and toward the west. Few of the immense number of emigrants who floated to the new settlements in the Northwest Territory during the first generation of the influx ever returned to the East again. They took up government land for home sites and farms, and in less than twenty years the country had been overrun. The woods of Ohio and the groves and prairies of Indiana and Illinois were in their turn dotted with log cabins; territorial and state governments laid out roads between the principal towns; Conestoga wagons and stage-coaches appeared on land routes of travel and the Ohio valley had ceased to be a frontier. New arrivals still came drifting down the river in ever increasing numbers, but they found established communities and an organized society, although it was a rough and boisterous one.

A short time after western river towns sprang into existence the flatboat demonstrated its versatility in a new way. Having served as a travel vehicle, a domicile, a fort and a barnyard, it finally appeared as a retail business establishment stocked with dry-goods, crockery, bon-

89.—Boat used by the artist, Henry Lewis, during his trip down the Mississippi. The superstructure was erected on a platform which in turn rested on two large canoes. This type of boat combined cheapness, swiftness, safety, a considerable carrying capacity and a minimum of labor in its navigation. From a drawing by Lewis.

nets, paint, cutlery, real boots and shoes, ready-made clothing, big colored handkerchiefs, tinware and all those other notions, fabrics and household articles then to be found in the small dry-goods, hardware and general stores of the East. There was a lack of such useful things in the earliest days of the river settlements, and a shrewd trader who fitted up his flatboat in the semblance of a

rural dry-goods shop and filled it with appropriate merchandise received an enthusiastic welcome.

Formalities worthy of such an important event were observed in the approach of a trading boat to a newly established community. When within a short distance of his anchorage the Admiral of the department store mounted to the roof, and, striking a posture in which dignity and philanthropy were judiciously mingled, he announced his presence by repeated blasts on the familiar tin horn. It was a sound that by common agreement signified either the arrival of news or an important occurrence of some sort, and was sure to bring to the landing place a group that would scatter information of the arrival. Forthwith all the women folk of the little hamlet dropped their other affairs and hurried to the boat to enjoy again the almost forgotten delights of shopping, comparing patterns and buying the things they needed. A store-boat was fitted with shelves for the goods and counters for their display. The indefinable aroma of fresh, clean fabrics filled its creaking cabin, and the dignified Admiral of half an hour before, transformed into a smiling merchant with a huge pair of shears, snipped his calicoes, bargained with customers and told them the doings of the outside world. After he had accumulated all the money the population had on hand he once more assumed his nautical rank, blew a farewell blast and disappeared down the river. The floating merchant of the Northwest Territory tried to collect in his craft the standard articles ordinarily sold in half a dozen kinds of retail shops, and such an enterprise was the progenitor of today's universal emporium.

All long-distance travel on the interior streams was performed with almost incredible slowness until the gen-

90.—Sunken trees were the most serious natural menace to travel on interior rivers during the flatboat age. Those hidden by the water were most dangerous of all. From a sketch by Lewis.

eral introduction of steamboats.[1] The whole region lying between Pittsburgh and Louisville was broadly known as the Upper Country, and the big barges that regularly moved from either of those towns or Cincinnati to the Lower Country—which was the southern Mississippi district — made one round trip a year. That was the length of time it took to go from the Ohio towns to New Orleans and back again in a barge which also carried freight.[2] By swifter and smaller keel-boats the time could be cut in half.[3] The down-stream journey was made in six weeks, and four and a half months were sufficient

[1] Which did not take place until 1817 in that part of the country.
[2] According to the statement of Morgan Neville, an early writer familiar with river travel, and many others. Neville's story of conditions in the pioneer days was written in 1829, and is to be found in "The West; Its Commerce and Navigation," by Hall: p. 130.
[3] Burnet's "Notes on the Settlement of the Northwest Territory."

in which to return. It required about a month to go from Louisville to Pittsburgh by keel-boat unless unusual effort was made.[1] A freight and passenger barge was three months on the same trip.[2] In the year 1817, just before the general introduction of steamboats, the whole passenger and freight traffic of the Ohio River was handled by twenty barges of a hundred tons each, and a hundred and fifty keel-boats of about thirty tons displacement.[3] These were the regular craft of the river. Their work had no relation to the travel tide of the emigrants, which proceeded as usual by means of the thousands of flatboats and arks that drifted down-stream every year.

The long reign of the clumsy timber boats did not abruptly end in western waters with the appearance of the steamboat there. It continued for some time even after steam was harnessed for river traffic, and did not entirely disappear until close to the year 1850. A few figures collected at St. Louis during the decade beginning with 1841 indicate the end of the period in which the many types of hand-power boats did so much toward peopling the Mississippi valley and in transporting its settlers and their goods. The statistics in question recorded the arrivals at St. Louis from the upper Mississippi, and showed the following facts:[4]

	Steamboats	Keel-boats
Arrivals in 1841	143	108
Arrivals in 1842	195	88
Arrivals in 1843	244	55
Arrivals in 1845	647	Not reported
Arrivals in 1846	663	Not reported

Corresponding conditions would doubtless be revealed by similar tabulations made at other river towns if they

[1] Neville's narrative: "Hall"; p. 130.
[2] Ibid: p. 130.
[3] Ibid: p. 130.
[4] The figures are from Hall's "The West; Its Commerce and Navigation": p. 97.

were available. The day of the flatboat and keel-boat and ark was done. They were vehicles of an archaic time devised for a work which could not have been performed without them, and by their necessary aid hundreds of thousands of square miles came under the sway of the white race.[1] Although the conquest in which they played the vital part took place only a little while ago, the conditions of society that then prevailed — so swift has later development been — seem to be separated from modern life by an interval of a thousand years. If by a fortunate chance one of the old-time covered flatboats is ever exhumed in its completeness of form and furnishings from a river bed, no other relic of the period will command more interest than the floating cabin in which some backwoods American family of the eighteenth century made the water pilgrimage into the West.

[1] Among the states affected directly or indirectly by the river migrations, and that received much of their early population through journeys performed in whole or in part on the interior rivers are Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

CHAPTER XVIII

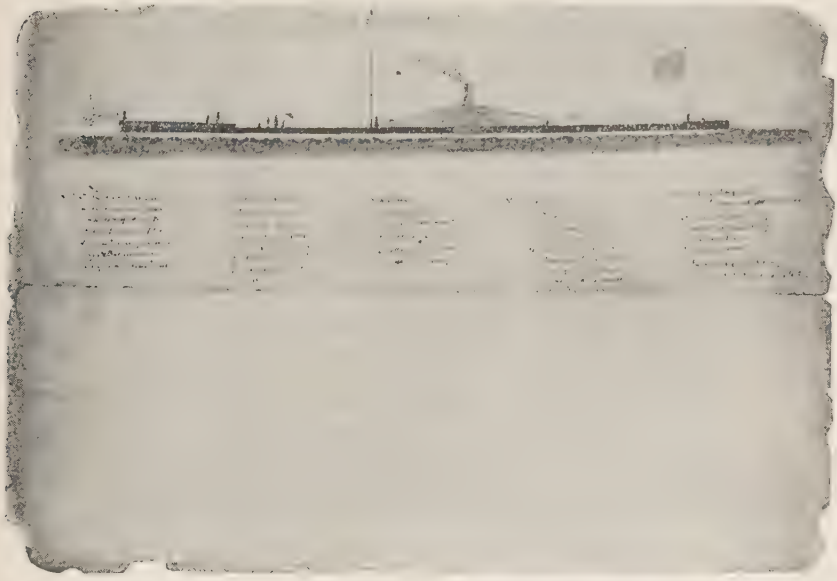
INTERIOR NEW YORK RE-OCCUPIED—HOW FENIMORE COOPER ACQUIRED HIS LOVE OF THE WILDERNESS—TALLYRAND TELLS WHY HE LAUGHED—THE BALTIMORE AND GENESSEE STEAM PACKET—A WATER ROUTE TO THE WEST—ADVENTURES OF MICHAUX, CUMING AND SCHULTZ—THE MAN FROM ST. LOUIS—A VIEW OF TRAVEL CONDITIONS AS THEY EXISTED JUST BEFORE THE EPOCH OF MECHANICAL VEHICLES

THE principal overland travel development in the eastern states during the early years of the flatboat era[1] in the West was one by which northern Pennsylvania and the interior of New York were re-peopled by the whites and permanently occupied. During the advance in question the Susquehanna River—as will be understood from what has already been said—played an important part. The long struggle with England, together with the frontier Indian warfare included in it, had driven all white inhabitants out of the country, and the few roads they had hewed through the woods with so much labor were overgrown and disappeared.

There was no idea in the mind of the people when the war with England ended but that all future conveniences of travel and transportation through the country would have to be created by the improvement of methods already known. The chief reliance of those who gave

[1] From 1787 to about 1805.

serious consideration to the question was placed in a greater usage of natural waterways and the building of roads or canals to connect them. And in mentally surveying the map of the country it was believed that the region so long controlled by the Iroquois was destined to



91.—More steamboats invented. A broadside view of the *Baltimore and Genessee Packet.* Like the two deck plans of the same vessel shown in colored plates, it is done in India ink and colors on a large folio sheet and reveals the lines of a trim-looking vessel. Original drawing of an unknown American inventor, about 1801-1803.

take an important position in the growth of future national communication facilities. General Washington was one of those to whom central New York presented opportunities of value, and in the year of 1783 he ascended the Mohawk River, from which stream he travelled overland to the head waters of the Susquehanna in order to study the problem himself, and to reflect in what manner the people might most easily move themselves and

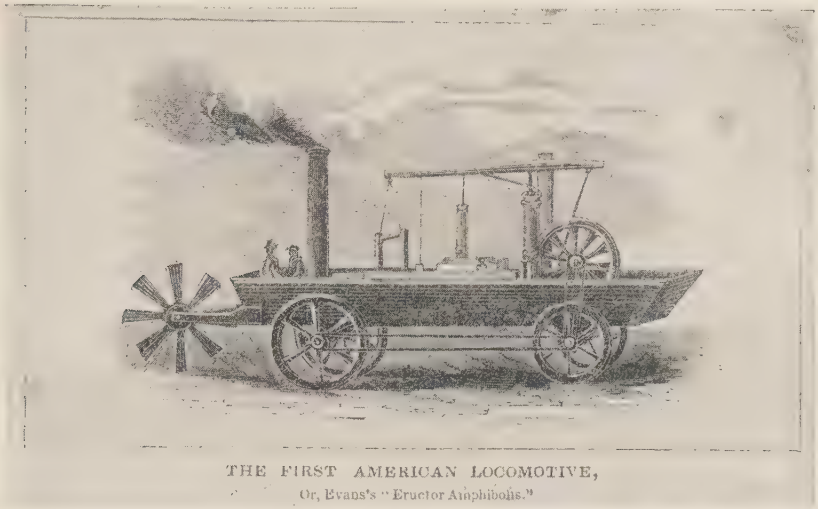
their effects into the new lands soon to come under American control.

"Prompted by these actual observations," he said in a letter describing the journey,[1] "I could not help taking more comprehensive and extensive views of the vast inland navigation of these United States, from maps and the information of others, and could not but be struck with the immense diffusion and importance of it, and with the goodness of that Providence which has dealt her favors to us with so profuse a hand. Would to God we may have wisdom enough to improve them."[2]

Although the Revolution had postponed the overrunning of interior New York and Pennsylvania, it resulted in the advance of a large number of people to those districts after the struggle was ended. Many men from New England and lower Pennsylvania had moved through the regions with Arnold, Sullivan, Clinton and other generals, and had observed the pleasant nature of the country. On their return to their homes after the war they spread a knowledge of what they had seen, and in that way the emigration was given its new impetus. Settlers who had been driven out also prepared to return. The ensuing stampede assumed large proportions in the year of 1785, and grew steadily bigger for years thereafter. Those who moved into interior New York from the lower part of the state and from New Jersey made their way up the Hudson in sailing boats and thence pushed farther inland along the Mohawk River in batteaux, carrying their worldly possessions with them. Pennsylvania people destined for the same country or for the northern sections of their own state went up the

[1] Written to the Marquis de Chastelleux.

[2] Within two years from the writing of the wish so earnestly expressed in this letter, Fitch laid his plan for steam navigation before the General, who rejected it.



THE FIRST AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVE,
Or, Evans's "Eructor Amphibolis."

92.—Oliver Evans' steamboat of 1804, built at Philadelphia for use as a river dredge. It was not a land locomotive. He placed wheels under the hull and ran it through the streets to demonstrate that steam vehicles could be run on land as well as on water.

Susquehanna in the way others had done years before. New England emigrants marched overland along the existing trails and roads.

The condition of the present beautiful, fertile and densely populated interior of New York state, as it appeared in 1785, has been preserved in letters written by one of the earliest pioneers who journeyed into that lonesome part of the country after the years of warfare had ceased.[1] The writer says: "In 1785 I visited the rough and hilly country of Otsego, where there existed not an inhabitant nor any trace of a road. I was alone, 300 miles from home, without bread, meat, or food of any kind. Fire and fishing tackle were my only means of subsistence. I caught trout in the brook and roasted them in the ashes.

[1] William Cooper, father of the novelist, James Fenimore Cooper. His letters were gathered together in a little volume published in Dublin in 1810 under the title: "A Guide to the Wilderness: Letters to William Sampson."

My horse fed on the grass that grew by the edge of the waters. I laid me down to sleep in my watch-coat, nothing but the melancholy wilderness around me. In this way I explored the country, formed my plans of future settlement, and meditated upon the spot where a place of trade or a village should afterward be established."[1]

After his first trip, here mentioned, William Cooper returned home and organized a party to proceed to the district he had explored and settle there. Later letters describe the journey of the overland emigrants. "Not one in 20 had a horse," he declares. "The way lay through rapid streams, across swamps, or over bogs. They had neither provisions to take with them nor money to purchase them; nor if they had, were any to be found on the way." The travellers got their food in the country they traversed, as the narrator himself had done, by hunting and fishing. After the party had reached the selected spot they built themselves cabin homes and set about raising crops and opening the country. Cooper also tells of the people's trouble in establishing roads by which they might get into touch with the outside world. In the first year or two they found winter to be the best time for their journeys, and the writer goes on to say, "they travelled sometimes by partial roads in sleighs and sometimes over the ice. . . . I had not funds of my own sufficient for the opening of new roads, but I collected the people at convenient seasons, and by joint efforts we were able to throw bridges over the deep streams, and to make, in the cheapest manner, such roads as suited our then humble purposes." Similar pioneer work was going on during the same years along the shores of numer-

[1] William Cooper's letters reveal in what manner his more famous but perhaps not more gifted son acquired his love of the wilderness and the excellence with which he described its features.

ous other streams and lakes in New York state, and in that way the forest was gradually penetrated by many paths which in time connected the different settlements and linked them with the older communities toward the east and south.

Yet the process of creating easy and rapid communication throughout all the extensive region that lay between the Hudson and the Ohio, and extended from Philadelphia on the south to Lakes Erie and Ontario was a very slow one. Until about the year 1800 the only established and frequented travel routes in it were the Mohawk and Susquehanna Rivers, the road extending westward

SCREW PROPELLER, BEING THE FIRST FERRY-BOAT RUN FROM HOBOKEN TO NEW YORK—BUILT BY JOHN STEVENS, 1804.

93.—John Stevens' screw propeller steamboat of 1804. Stevens had undertaken the building of steamboats as a result of Fitch's work. He and his friends used the craft in New York Bay and on the Hudson River, but it was not intended as a public ferry. The machinery, in a reconstructed hull, is in possession of the Stevens Institute.

through the southern part of Pennsylvania to Pittsburgh, and the trail stretching from the Hudson at Catskill to the upper Susquehanna. At the commencement of the nineteenth century scarcely an impression had been made on the all-pervading woods in the territory here defined, nor had there been appreciable decrease in the difficulty with which a journey through them was accomplished. The people still moved about on horseback or their own legs, drifted with the currents of the rivers or pushed themselves up-stream in the same old way. Ten years after William Cooper first penetrated to Otsego Lake, the Genessee region of New York state was visited by the Frenchman Talleyrand,[1] who later penned a description of his trip.[2] His narrative discloses the impression which American backwoods life and travel made on a man accustomed to all the conveniences civilization could then afford.

"I was struck with astonishment," the foreign visitor wrote. "At less than 154 miles distance from the capital[3] all trace of men's presence disappeared. Nature, in all her primeval vigor, confronted us; forests as old as the world itself; decayed plants and trees covering the very ground where they once grew in luxuriance; thick and intricate bushes that often barred our progress. In the face of these immense solitudes we gave free vent to our imaginations; our minds built cities, villages and hamlets. . . . To be riding through a large wild forest, to lose one's way in it in the middle of the night, and to call to one's companion in order to ascertain that you are not missing each other; all this gives impressions im-

[1] Then residing in America because of inclement political conditions at home.
[2] In his "Memoirs." Talleyrand went northward from Philadelphia on horseback with a friend, and returned down the Susquehanna in a batteau.
[3] Philadelphia was then the capital.

possible to define. . . . When I cried, 'So-and-so, are you here,' and my companion replied, 'Unfortunately I am, my Lord,' I could not help laughing."

The trouble experienced by the people of interior New York in establishing an easy route to the outside world resulted in again bringing forward a plan for applying steam to river navigation. Though the inventor of the *Baltimore and Genessee Packet* is unknown, his plans and written proposal still remain, and serve to emphasize the many gaps to be filled before a complete chronicle of the earlier days is available.

The drawings of the nameless inventor are reproduced in this narrative. They show a paddle-wheel steamboat identical in its essential characteristics with the steam river vessels destined later to come into general use. Certain features of the drawings and of the written statements accompanying them fix the date of the invention sometime between the years 1801 and 1806, inclusive.[1]

The dimensions of the boat as given on one of the plans are "80 feet long 22 feet wide and 3½ deep or 4 feet." The paddles are stated to be "18 inches deep and 2½ [feet] broad—8 of them if possible." The rear part of the boat, says the inventor, is occupied by the stern sheets, "in which it is to be hoped many a passenger will be lodged and under these broad seats lockers where much cold provisions may be kept for the passengers for there must be no cooking on board." Immediately beneath the broadside view of the vessel are the words: "This being the first Steam packet,[2] we will call her the lady of the lake or Washington or the Genessee and Baltimore

[1] Probably between 1801 and 1803. The history and condition of the Genesee country between the same years is a further indication that this vessel was designed within the period named. No earlier plans of any steamboat can at present be traced, though it is possible that prior drawings exist. Fitch's drawings have disappeared.

[2] The inventor had seemingly never heard of Fitch's boat of 1788-90.

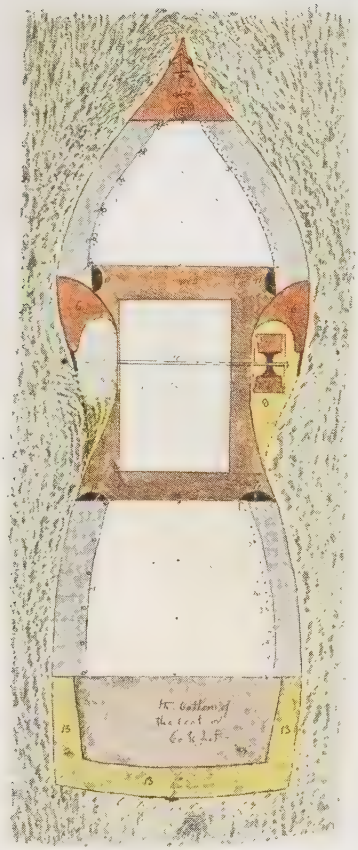
Packet." On the same drawing the inventor has written, "Passengers in abundance . . . all for Genessee," and in another part of the broadside view he refers to the forward flag as "a Packet signal of 13 stripes, the true good old standard of '76 the origin and foundation of all our happiness and independence—it is hoisted occasionally only and as a signal and lure for passengers."

On the sheet containing an amended deck plan the projector has written in pencil a plea in support of his steamboat in which he refers to it as "my discovery and contrivance,"[1] and discusses the purposes for which it is to be used. Enough of his statement is decipherable to show the craft was intended to ply from Baltimore to a point as far up the Susquehanna as it could reach, and that he was submitting the plans to a number of other men for their endorsement as a practical improvement in travel vehicles. The still readable parts of the written appeal are quoted.[2] Unidentified though the inventor

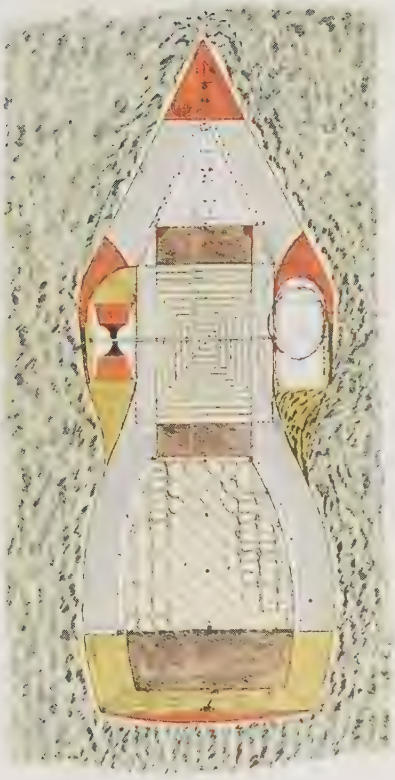
[1] Another indication that he had never heard of Fitch. Had he known of the extensive use of a steamboat on the Delaware, years before, it is not likely he would have claimed the invention of it for himself when laying these drawings before other men in an effort to secure approval of his proposition.

[2] Topmost inscription on Deck Plan No. 2. Line arrangement as in the original manuscript of the inventor. Undecipherable words indicated by dots, thus: ..... Faint but apparent readings in parenthesis.

Line:
1.—108
2.—Set up end ways (in the)
3.—. . . . . .
4.—I suppose 50 more might be
5.—put length ways upon the
6.—top of the others and in the
7.—forcastle about 50 (more) end up
8.—and about 30 lengthways but
9.—there is no good (unless) . . . . .
10.—untill she is loaded & then
11.—we shall see how far she
12.—sinks in the water . . . (and how)
13.—deep the (water) . . . . (Generally) is
14.—and those . . . . . to . . . .
15.—load largely (upon) . . . how . . .
16.—lower that . . . . . .
17.—(less) than a boat built
18.—of this size by way of
19.—experiment which
20.—might be . . . . . (doubt)
21.—& . . . . . run as a packet up
22.—(or) in (exploring) to Genesee . . . .
23.—& on . . . . . up the
24.—small rivers branching
25.—(into) the Susquehanna to



First deck plan of the "Baltimore and Genesee Steam Packet." Original drawing for an early American side-wheel steamboat designed to run from Baltimore up the Susquehanna river to the newly settled Genesee Country. The inventor is unknown. Date of sketch probably about 1801-1803. Drawing in India ink and colors on a large folio sheet, with specifications and description in marginal manuscript. Amer.



Second and revised deck-plan of the "Baltimore and Genesee Steam Packet." The inventor has modified the lines of the forward part of the hull to get greater speed. The indicated dimensions are 70 feet length, 23 feet width, and 4½ feet depth of hold. Each paddle wheel to have eight blades. The faint marginal notes on this plan, so far as decipherable, are quoted elsewhere. Drawing in India ink and colors on a large folio sheet. Date, about 1801-1803. Amer.

of this steamboat is, his drawings and words reveal another of the early and forgotten efforts made to overcome an age-long handicap under which the people so laboriously struggled.

The state government of New York began to display some interest in the question of better highways about the year 1790, and took control of the road leading from the Hudson toward the Susquehanna. In 1792 a party of travellers passing over it from Connecticut required but eight days to cover the distance between the two rivers, although they were driving live stock with them. The highway was then twenty-five feet wide. In 1792 a weekly

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26.— . . . . . (but what) such (boats)
27.—could do (& they)
28.— . . . . . certainly (go)

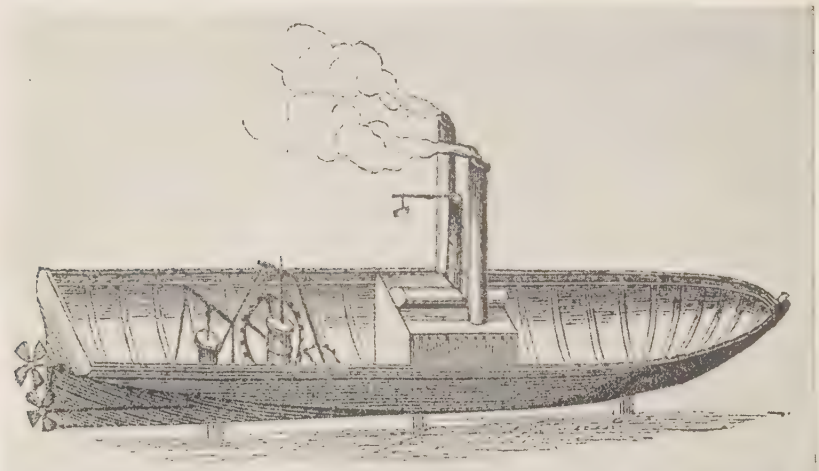
Another statement on Plan No. 2 reads:
Line:
1.—in this plan I have lengthened the
2—forecastle part, taking in about a
3.—third part of the whole into nearly
4.—a triangle, believing that
5.—such a form would more rapidly
6.—force up stream against current . . . . downward
7.—which is the great desideratum

Inscription in center of Deck Plan No. 2 at bottom of the sheet.
Line:
1.—Cuts great economy both in time and money
2.— . . . (I hope) . . . make this trip . . . any other system & (there)
3.— . . . very . . . are . . . . . (of) Baltimore up into the upper part
4.—(of Susquehanna) . . . . safely . . . . . is also worth
5.— . . . . . and safe against all . . .
6.—(to land) . . . . . the
7.— . . . . . I will be . . . . . .
8.— . . . . . .

Inscription in lower right corner of Deck Plan No. 2.
Line:
1.—(I) would be satisfied . . . . . (up to a great)
2.—deal (particularly) in carrying . . . . . .
3.—of (every) kind . . . . . .
4.— . . . and rapid (rivers) of that . . . . . a . . . . .
5.—and easy conveyance . . . . . .
6.—well Gentlemen this is all . . . . suppose
7.—that my discovery and contrivance answers
8.—all my . . . . . (say it) suggests . . . .
9.—(which possibly) may . . . . . .
10.— . . . . . (and when saved) . . . . (you)
11.—most (sanguine &) enthusiastic . . . . .
12.—(too often) . . . . . only &
13.—nothing else . . . . . it may be (sent)
14.— . . . . . (can with them) . . . . . .
15.—However . . . . Gentlemen judge for your
16.—selves . . . . . .
17.— . . . . . A great (mind) I should.

There is nothing known to show how the gentlemen judged. Three sheets of worn paper and some faintly written words are apparently all that remain of the eighth or ninth effort to introduce steamboats in America. A complete list of all early attempts of the sort will be found in a later chapter.

mail route was established over the thoroughfare, and from that time onward it constantly increased in importance. Later it was rebuilt with a surface of stone and gravel and became known as the Catskill Turnpike. The history of this road typified the last stages in the development of all similar highways by which they were



TWO-SCREW PROPELLER, BEING THE SECOND FERRY-BOAT RUN FROM HOBOKEN TO NEW YORK—BUILT BY JOHN STEVENS, 1805.

94.—Stevens' twin-screw propeller of 1805. Used by the builder as his former vessel had been. Both it and the 1804 boat attained speeds of from five to seven miles an hour. Machinery in possession of the Stevens Institute.

finally transformed from red men's trails into white men's routes of travel.

By the year 1800 a country-wide demand for good turnpikes was manifest. So many proposals for work of the character were introduced in every legislature that it became evident the states themselves could not undertake general highway construction. They were too poor, and

yet were confronted by an urgent need of public utilities demanding an outlay of millions of dollars.[1] When the method of successful turnpike construction was found, the outcry redoubled. A new generation had grown up since the Revolution, and was fast assuming control of all those matters—except national politics—that concerned the mass of the people. Its members were anxious to improve their material welfare and the conditions under which they transacted their affairs of every sort. They lived in the present and future; not in the past. Looking backward had begun to go out of fashion. Whenever an improvement of any kind was proposed they considered it on its merits, no matter to what it related, and accepted or rejected it in accordance with their best opinion and limited experience. They believed their country was already the most wonderful nation on earth, and showed much irritation when they found any one who entertained doubt on the question. The new generation of Americans was alert of mind, quick to see opportunities, eager to move ahead toward wealth and power, and prompt to invest its substance in any enterprise offering advantage to the public and gain to itself.

Out of these new qualities of public thought came a suggestion that the task of turnpike building be turned over to private companies created for the purpose. The idea was adopted through all the country. Under its general operation many thousands of miles of improved roads were constructed, and within a few years it was possible to travel by stage-coach from the Atlantic Coast to the border of Indiana in about two weeks, at a cost of only forty-five or fifty dollars exclusive of board and

[1] Some states passed laws under which lotteries were organized, and the proceeds from the sale of tickets, after the prize money had been deducted, were devoted to the improvement of roads and the building of bridges.

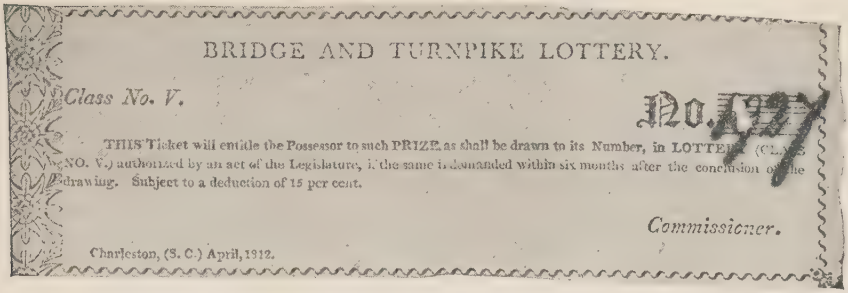
lodging. But in order to make the journey in such quick time the traveller had to keep going sixteen hours of every twenty-four and escape accident on the way. His total expenses for the trip were usually about sixty-five dollars.[1]

The companies organized to build new roads or improve old ones were given authority by the states in which they operated to charge the public for use of the highways so made, and in that manner the toll system was established. Toll-gates sprang up like mushrooms, and the driver of any sort of vehicle was stopped every four or five miles—often more frequently -to pay for the privilege of going farther. The practise of laying out wagon roads by private enterprise and of maintaining them under corporate management remained in operation for a long period.[2]

The new public attitude toward questions relating to the advancement of the country was a most important feature of the time. Men commenced to fret at the obstacles to communication so long accepted as a necessary part of their surroundings. News came back from the western country of the immensity of the lately settled region and its possibilities as a home, a producing section and a market for many commodities. Little groups assembled to talk of such things. The mental horizon of the people expanded enormously, and the shadow of their future power fell upon them. It was prescience, more than vainglory, which impelled the people to

[1] No one stage-coach company or proprietor in the East ever had facilities to carry people any such distance. Usually a stage company ran its vehicles for a day's journey each way from its headquarters. Passengers were then transferred to the vehicles of another proprietor. Often there existed a sort of traffic arrangement whereby the coach of one owner awaited the arrival of another. West of Wheeling, in the earliest days, stage wagons were used before regular stage-coaches appeared. The average fare paid by a traveller on a journey to the West was about five cents a mile.

[2] Many of the toll road franchises have only lapsed in recent years, and a few are still effective. Maryland, and perhaps other states, yet possess toll-gates. Not until after the Civil War did the various commonwealths generally adopt a policy under which roadways were considered public works to be created and maintained by the people themselves and used without toll fees.


BRIDGE AND TURNPIKE LOTTERY.

Class No. V. No. 477

THIS Ticket will entitle the Possessor to such PRIZE as shall be drawn to its Number, in LOTTERY (CLASS NO. V.) authorized by an act of the Legislature, if the same is demanded within six months after the conclusion of the drawing. Subject to a deduction of 15 per cent.

Commissioner.

Charleston, (S. C.) April, 1812.

95.—Soon after the year 1800 a general demand for better roads arose. Some of the states, instead of appropriating money or levying taxes directly for the purpose, fostered a widespread gambling mania by organizing and conducting "Bridge and Turnpike Lotteries" to secure the needed funds. Lotteries were very popular. Churches were occasionally erected by their aid.

proclaim so boastfully the might that did not yet exist.

As a consequence of political and social developments then taking place, it became the custom, soon after 1800, for many men of the old states to make extensive excursions through all the country east of the Mississippi in order to see for themselves the new conditions and judge in what manner the nation as a whole was likely to be affected by them. Numerous foreign visitors, similarly interested in the subject, came to study at first hand the situation created by the birth and expansion of a commonwealth so favorably endowed. On their return to the East or to Europe the investigators were overwhelmed by demands for precise information regarding what they had seen and how they had got about through the outlying territories. Such inquiries and the widespread interest revealed through them led to the writing of a number of books by men who had journeyed in the interior, and their narratives are the chief sources of present knowledge concerning American life and manners during the first decade of the last century. Among the individuals who undertook such explorations and whose stories of wan-

derings are highly esteemed were Fortesque Cuming,[1] Christopher Schultz[2] and F. A. Michaux.[3] A capitulation of some of the incidents told by those chroniclers[4] will reveal the travel conditions prevailing just before the beginning of the modern epoch of scientific, machine-driven vehicles.

Michaux comments on the new quality that had come so prominently into the national life with the generation after the Revolution. "There prevails in the United States," he declares, "a degree of public spirit which induces individuals to adopt any project that may tend to enrich the country by agriculture and commerce." He began his journey from Charleston, in South Carolina, and indicates that almost all travel between the South and North was then undertaken by way of the sea in sailing vessels "tastefully fitted up and conveniently arranged for the reception of passengers." The usual time consumed in the trip to New York was ten days, and the charge was forty or fifty dollars. From New York he went to Philadelphia in a stage-coach. A day or more was still required to move between the two cities, and a seat cost five dollars. At the inns he paid half a dollar for breakfast, a dollar for dinner and half a dollar for supper. The stage driver also got fifty cents from each passenger, the giving of which seemed to be customary.

Leaving Philadelphia the traveller set out for Pittsburgh, where he thought his voyage down the Ohio was

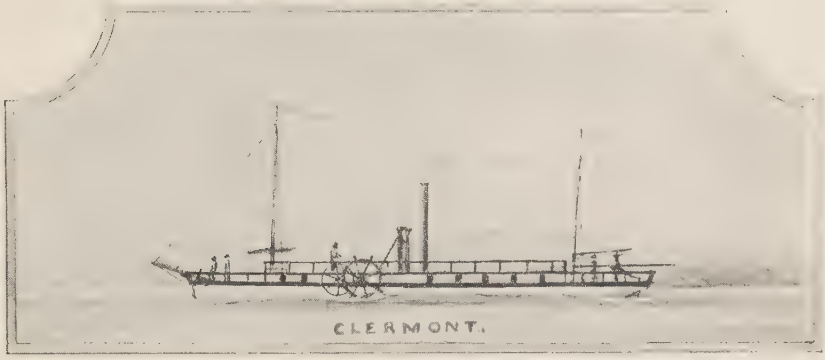
[1] Cuming was an Englishman of culture and wide experience in many countries. His book, "Sketches of a Tour to the Western Country," was printed in Pittsburgh in 1810. Cuming began his journey in 1807 and moved about for two years or more.

[2] Schultz' narrative is called "Travels on an Inland Voyage," and describes the country in 1807-8.

[3] Michaux was a French physician and scientist. His "Travels to the Westward of the Alleghany Mountains" was issued in Paris and republished in England in 1805. Michaux' trip was made in 1802.

[4] Like all travellers they made some mistakes, but they were observers without extreme bias and their descriptions of the country and statements of personal experiences are generally trustworthy. The principal errors in their narratives have to do with dates in antecedent American history. Cuming makes several mistakes of that nature.

to begin, and got as far as Shippensburg by regular lines of stage-coaches. The distance thus covered was a hundred and forty miles. "From Shippensburg to Pittsburgh," Michaux goes on to say, "the distance is 170 miles; and the stages not going farther, you are obliged to



96.—Robert Fulton begins his building of steamboats in America. His first successful vessel, the *Clermont,* as she appeared in 1807. No authenticated contemporary picture of the craft is known. The one here shown is probably the most reliable, and was done from personal recollection by Richard Varick De Witt, in 1858. The original drawing, from which this is a photograph, belongs to the New York Historical Society. The next four illustrations are also of Fulton's work.

perform the rest of the journey on foot, or to purchase a horse, of which there are always many for sale; but the country people are such cheats that they always make you pay double the value for them; and on arriving at Pittsburgh you are obliged to dispose of them for half what they cost. I was inclined, from motives of economy, to travel the rest of the way on foot, but from some remarks which were made to me, I thought proper to join with an American officer who had travelled with me in the stage, and was likewise going to Pittsburgh; we therefore bought a horse between us, on which we rode thither by turns." He reached Pittsburgh nine days after leaving

Philadelphia, only three days of the interval having been spent in stages. His average speed over the whole distance was not quite thirty-five miles a day.

Michaux changed his plans on arriving at Pittsburgh and walked to Wheeling, in Virginia, a town of twenty-six houses. There he bought a log canoe twenty-four feet long, eighteen inches wide and equally deep, and with a companion picked up on the way, started down the Ohio River. "We covered our canoe for one-quarter of its length," he says, "with a piece of canvas stretched on two hoops.[1] In less than three-quarters of an hour all our arrangements were made for continuing our voyage. . . . We left Wheeling at six o'clock in the evening. We made twelve miles that evening, and stopped for the night on the right bank of the Ohio. . . . Although we had advanced only twelve miles we were, nevertheless, fatigued, less from paddling continually than from remaining constantly in a sitting posture, with extended legs. Our canoe, the bottom of which was very narrow, compelled us to keep that position: the slightest motion would have exposed us to upset. At the expiration of a few days custom caused these inconveniences to disappear, and we proceeded on our journey with comparative ease and comfort. . . . Our second day's progress was 30 miles; the third, 40. . . ."

The two men frequently fell in with all the various species of craft so numerous on the river, and Michaux's first vision of an emigrant flatboat is described in the following words:

"I could not conceive what such large square boxes could be, which seemed abandoned to the current, presenting alternately their ends, their sides, and even their

[1] As a protection against the sun. It was July, and very warm.

angles. As they[1] advanced I heard a confused noise, without distinguishing anything, on account of the height of the sides. On ascending the banks of the river I perceived in these boats several families, bringing with them their horses, cows, fowls, carts, ploughs, harness, beds, instruments of husbandry; in short, all the furniture requisite for house-keeping, agriculture, and the management of a farm. These people had thus abandoned themselves to the water for several hundred miles, probably without knowing where they might stop, to exercise their industry and to enjoy in peace the fruit of their labors."

Many references to the appearance of the country are contained in the relation of the trip. When about thirty-six miles above Marietta, as an example, the narrator measured a plane tree[2] forty-seven feet in circumference at a distance of four feet above the ground, and whose girth was maintained practically undiminished "to a height of fifteen or twenty feet." In commenting on the monster vegetable, Michaux goes on to say: "Our host informed us that if we would pass the day with him he would show us trees of equal size in other parts of the wood."

Thus the voyagers drifted along for ten days until they reached Limestone, in Kentucky. They had come only three hundred and forty-eight miles, "during which," Michaux says, "we were obliged to paddle incessantly." The slowness of his progress decided him to quit the river at Limestone, and leaving his companion to continue on alone, he struck off overland on the road to Lexington. The distance was sixty-five miles, and he got there in two days and a half. At Lexington he bought another horse

[1] It was apparently a fleet of five or six boats only partly roofed over; a combination of flatboat and ark.

[2] Platanus occidentalis.

without commenting on the transaction, and proceeded southward along the road to Nashville, in Tennessee, at the rate of nearly thirty miles a day. From Nashville, which settlement he left on September 5th, Michaux travelled eastward along an old wilderness road and

97.—The *Clermont* as she appeared in 1808, after being lengthened and having her paddle-wheels enclosed. From a photograph of the drawing by De Witt in the collections of the New York Historical Society.

reached Morgantown, in North Carolina—a distance of six hundred miles—in just one month. "I arrived in Charleston," he concluded, "on the 18th of October, 1802, three months and a half after my departure from Philadelphia, having gone through a space of nearly eighteen hundred miles." The visitor from abroad had found it

either impossible or inconvenient to avail himself of stage-coaches for all but a hundred and forty miles of the distance. For almost the whole trip he went on horseback, on foot, or on the water.

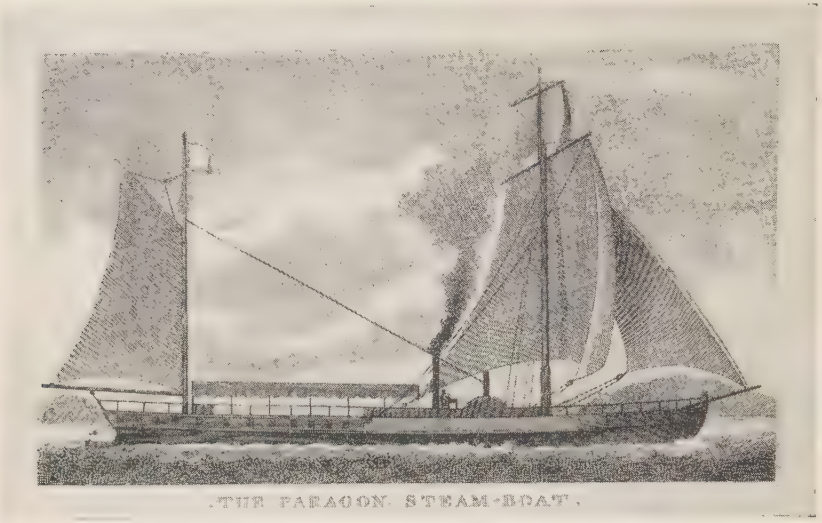
In the same year of 1802 an unbroken communication by stage-coaches was opened from Boston to Savannah, in Georgia. The details of the through trip if then performed by land in the most expeditious time, were as here given:

	Time	Stage-coach fare
Boston to New York.....	4 days	$10.00
New York to Philadelphia..	1½ days	5.00
Philadelphia to Charleston.	15 days	50.00
Charleston to Savannah....	2 days	5.00
Totals.....	22½ days	$70.00

The distance traversed by the stage-coaches between Boston and Savannah was about one thousand two hundred miles, and the average speed maintained by the passenger was some fifty-three miles a day. In addition to the cost of transportation he spent at least twenty-five dollars for board and lodging.

Fortescue Cuming, like Michaux, first proceeded overland from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh.[1] He walked the entire distance and was twenty-seven days on the way. Thence he also went down the river, on which part of his journey we need not follow him except to notice two circumstances mentioned in his narrative. The first of them discloses—as did Michaux's reference to the big trees—the change wrought in the appearance of the country and in other related conditions since those days. He

[1] Starting in January of 1807.



98.—The *Paragon,* Fulton's fourth boat, built in 1811 for use on the Hudson River. She was 173 feet long, had two masts, and under steam power, without the aid of sails, developed a speed of about five or six miles an hour.

observed cotton growing as far north as Portsmouth, in Ohio, and saw vast numbers of bright plumaged paroquets in the same locality. The other incident was his encounter with a man who was paddling up the Ohio in a canoe. It developed that the up-stream voyager lived in St. Louis, and was on his way to visit his brother in Pittsburgh. He had been seven weeks on the water and expected to reach his destination in less than three weeks more.[1]

Cuming continued down the river to Kentucky, and after investigating the resources of the state[2] he turned northward into Ohio, which he crossed over the newly

[1] Fourteen or fifteen hours are now necessary for the same trip.

[2] In Lexington he found 39 two-wheeled gigs and chaises, 21 four-wheeled coaches and 4 billiard tables.

The Golden Eagle tavern at Frankfort had a dining-room 72 feet long, and the flies were kept from the food by negro girls who waved green silk fans. The host presided in state at the head of the table. Beef was four cents a pound, and a quarter of lamb 25 cents. Vegetables, the writer says, were cheap. All the big Kentucky taverns had bells on their roofs which were rung at meal times to summon the guests.

improved post-road extending eastward through Chillicothe, Lancaster and Zanesville to Wheeling.[1] "I experienced amongst these honest and friendly farmers real hospitality," he relates, "for they vied with each other in lodging me at their houses and in giving me a hearty and generous welcome."[2] In West Union he stopped for breakfast at a tavern and partook of bread and butter, eggs, and milk, for which he offered the customary quarter of a dollar. But the landlord "would receive only the half of that sum, saying even that was too much." Cuming was considerably impressed by the incident, for he says "such instances of modest and just honesty rarely occur." Proceeding blithely along the road with twelve and a half cents more in his pocket than he had expected to possess, the pedestrian was soon afterward overtaken by a man on horseback with whom he struck acquaintance in the manner of the highway. The stranger was going from western North Carolina to Chillicothe, and had traversed the five hundred miles in three weeks.

Encounters like that were constantly occurring through all the expanses west of the Alleghanies. The standard greeting was: "From what part of the world did you come, stranger?" The roads were full of pilgrims from everywhere; some trudging alone; others mounted; still others in the big canvas covered wagons. "I found . . ." says Cuming, "a little old man. He buckled on his knapsack, and we proceeded together. He had travelled on foot from Tennessee River, through a

[1] His story of that part of the trip makes his narrative one of the most valuable of all accounts descriptive of conditions prevailing along an early American land artery of travel. The Ohio section of the road, before being taken over by the state—a few years prior to Cuming's trip—was known as "Zane's Trace." It was laid out in part by the pioneer Zane in 1796, and for a few years thereafter was not available for wheeled vehicles. When Cuming went over it stage wagons were running regularly. The road crossed into Kentucky at Maysville, and was the principal overland route southward through Kentucky, Tennessee and all the lower Mississippi region to New Orleans.

[2] Cuming here refers to private farmhouses; not to inns.

part of the state of Tennessee, quite across Kentucky, and so far in Ohio in nine days, at the rate of thirty-six miles a day." The little old man had gone down the rivers from Wheeling as part of a flatboat crew and was returning home again. The companions came in the evening time to a log-cabin tavern, where they were received with hospitality in the shape of a concert organized by the host to entertain them. "Three of his sons play the violin by ear," remarks Cuming. "They had two shocking bad violins, one of which was of their own manufacture, on which they scraped away without mercy. I attempted to seem pleased, and I believe succeeded in making them think I was so."[1]

Near the little town of Cambridge, then a few months old and with but twelve log cabins, the Englishman met a travelling Massachusetts family. So admirable was the system its members pursued while on the march, and so many the comforts they enjoyed, that he speaks of the party and its methods with admiration. "They had a wagon with four horses," he explains, "and a saddle horse rode by one of the girls. On their stopping, the daughters began directly to prepare supper as though they were at home, baked bread enough to serve them that night and next day, and then they sat down to sewing as composedly as if they had been in their own house, and not on a journey; while the boys took care of the horses, and the old couple, though still active and healthy, sat at their ease, chatting and enjoying themselves."

Cuming had entered Ohio at a point opposite Maysville on August 6th of 1807, and he reached Pittsburgh on August 21st, having travelled by easy marches on

[1] Cuming himself was a musician and a performer on the instrument. He must have suffered more than he tells.

99.—One of Fulton's boats, possibly the *Paragon*. Altered from an earlier engraving of the same scene in which the vessel was shown with sails. In this picture, Hewitt, the engraver, forgot to remove the shadows of the sails that no longer exist. From a sketch made by the early artist James Glennie.

foot, in the saddle and in the stage wagons, three of which passed each way during a week's time. He commented on the bad state of the roads as compared with those in his own country, and marvelled at the skill of stage drivers. "Though the European drivers far exceed the American in dexterity and speed on their fine roads," was his opinion, "in this country they would be good for nothing, and would pronounce it impossible to get a carriage through roads that the American driver dashes through without a thought."

Christopher Schultz began his journey into the West from New York City and went all the way by the water route. Upon reducing his narrative to a table showing the schedule of his movements between New York and Pittsburgh, the following result is obtained:

	Miles.	Method.	Days.
New York to Albany	160	Hudson river steamboat	1½
Albany to Schenectady	15	turnpike	1½
Schenectady to Utica	104	5 ton keel-boat	5
Utica to Oswego	104	5 ton keel-boat	3
Oswego to Lewiston	172	lake sailing boat	3
Lewiston to Black Rock	17	mud road	1½
Black Rock to Presque Isle	90	lake sailing vessel	2
Presque Isle to Le Bœuf	14	turnpike	1
Le Bœuf to Pittsburgh	240	10 ton keel-boat	5
Totals	916		23½

His average daily rate of travel between the two towns was therefore a little less than forty-one miles.

The all-water route to the interior of the country

100.—The *Chancellor Livingston,* Fulton's last boat. Completed after his death in 1816. She was 156 feet long, and the fastest steamboat yet constructed. The cabin had 118 sleeping berths for passengers. Engraved from a drawing by the Swedish traveller Klinckowstrom.

had been in use ever since the end of the Revolution, and such part of it as lay between New York City and Lake Erie was a thoroughfare for many years before that time. Previous to the date of Schultz' excursion a traveller ascended the Hudson River to Albany in a sail-boat, and then, after a short overland jaunt of fifteen miles to Schenectady, embarked on the Mohawk and Oswego Rivers and so reached Lake Ontario. Schultz did the same in all respects save that he went up the Hudson in a boat propelled by steam power which had just been completed by an American artist and inventor named Robert Fulton. The craft that conveyed him on the first installment of his trip was the celebrated *Clermont.* At Oswego Schultz found passage on a lake schooner about to depart for Lewiston, a little New York town on the Niagara River, near its mouth, where he arrived in three days. Thence he pushed overland for seventeen miles to the site whereon Buffalo was to arise, a spot

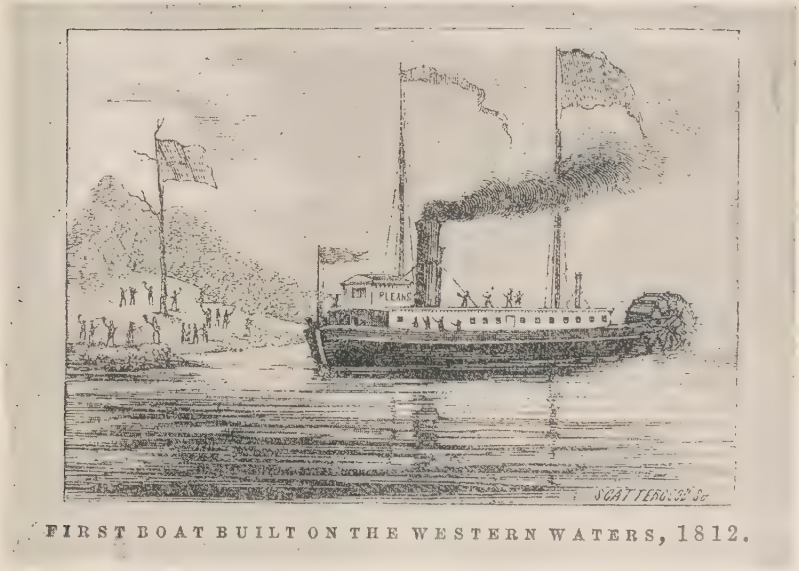
then also called Black Rock. No wagon road existed across the portage; only a horse path.

At Black Rock he once more embarked on a schooner, but the current in the lake moved so swiftly toward Niagara River that the boat had to be pulled for some distance by oxen before it dared venture out on the open water. Head winds arose, and the run of 90 miles to Presque Isle required two days for its accomplishment. The road from Presque Isle to Fort Le Bœuf[1] was a sad imitation of a highway, although it had been opened by the French as early as 1752; and Schultz, though mounted, could hardly cover more than a mile in an hour. He struggled from sunrise to darkness in a mud puddle fifteen miles long. So absurd was the road in question that wagons hauled by three pairs of oxen were sometimes three days in accomplishing the distance.

Coming at last to the little settlement where his embarkation as an inland navigator was to take place, the traveller found to his astonishment that French Creek would scarcely float a duck. It was normally but four inches deep, yet the stream was navigable for keel-boats of considerable size, and Schultz' experience was but an illustration of the expedients to which men of that period resorted. He simply waited for rain. The downpour came at last, and continued for six hours. With its beginning the whole town bustled into excitement, activity and confusion. Eight newly built keel-boats were hastily loaded, and all those who for any reason desired to go to Pittsburgh or the West made ready for departure. In twenty-four hours the creek was a muddy torrent two feet deep, and away floated another installment of the French Creek navy, never to come back again.

[1] Waterford, on the head waters of French Creek.

A rapid rise in a little stream was called a fresh, and by taking instant advantage of such a sudden temporary increase in water it was sometimes possible to use big boats for fifty or a hundred miles on trifling creeks otherwise but ankle deep in their upper reaches. Every brook in all the outlying regions was utilized in this way, and



FIRST BOAT BUILT ON THE WESTERN WATERS, 1812.

101.—The *New Orleans,* first steamboat to navigate the Ohio and Mississippi. She was built at Pittsburgh by Nicholas Roosevelt in 1811, and under his guidance reached New Orleans early in the following year. Fulton and Livingston were the proprietors of the craft, which was constructed and sent south as part of the plan by which the owners were seeking to obtain a monopoly of steam transportation in America.

a fresh was then looked upon, by the inhabitants along the affected rivulet, very much as a special excursion train is now considered by a small railroad town. A transportation schedule arranged on that basis was somewhat irregular and uncertain, to be sure, but it was the best that could be provided in many localities.

Schultz thus descended French Creek for about a hundred miles. Whenever one of the boats ran aground, which was often, everybody in it jumped out and pushed. There could be no delay, for the craft had to be kept on the crest of the high water. After the party had reached the Alleghany River it was clear sailing. At night the passengers tied up the boats along the shore, built campfires, roasted venison on forked sticks for supper, rolled up in their blankets and went to sleep. Altogether there were forty-two individuals in the company, and they all reached Pittsburgh without serious mishap after a voyage of some two hundred and forty miles. The cost of the trip by water from Fort Le Bœuf was but two dollars, exclusive of food. Provender was either carried by the people themselves or furnished by the boatmen as desired.

At Pittsburgh, then a bustling town of five hundred houses, Schultz bought a big keel-boat for a hundred and thirty dollars and continued on down the Ohio. He gives the cost of a water trip from Pittsburgh to New Orleans as ten dollars, exclusive of board, though the charge was not a fixed one and varied according to the whim of the boat proprietor or his desire for passengers. Wheeling was a flourishing village of two hundred houses and a center of travel between the East and West. Two through stages arrived there each week from Philadelphia, and others continued onward to Lexington, Tennessee and the South over the road formerly called Zane's Trace. Cincinnati was a thriving city of three hundred houses and the center of Ohio valley activity. The favorite route across Ohio from south to north was by way of the Scioto River, which was sometimes navigable by keel-boats for about a hundred and ninety miles. At the head of northbound traffic on the Scioto the travel-

ler walked across country to a branch of the Sandusky River and there took passage in another boat for conveyance to the shore of Lake Erie. The journey from the Ohio River to the lake only required a week or ten days.

Such were the routes and facilities for communication between the Atlantic coast and the middle states just after the nineteenth century began. The conditions described by Michaux, Cuming and Schultz prevailed until the general introduction of steamboats on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. It is well within the bounds of safety to say that a journey from New York, Boston or Philadelphia to the western settlements during the years in question demanded almost as much time, called for far more preparation and entailed many times the discomfort, hardship and danger now encountered in travelling around the world.

End of Volume I

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